Hafa Adai!

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Luhk sisters' mysterious disappearance marks 9th year. PAGE 2
Funeral services for Lifoifoi this Saturday. PAGE 5

75¢

Widened mass testing in place

By JUSTINE NAUTA
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REPORTER

As the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continues with its mass testing at the Francisco C. Ada/ Saipan International Airport, plans are now in place to widen that initiative into the community.

Although many challenges still remain, one potential plan would be for health care workers to go to a specific site, obtain swab specimens from residents and bring them back to the hospital for testing, said CHCC chief executive officer Esther Muña.

For this, CHCC is working with the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force to be able to use vans of the Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority to bring people who might not have transportation to go to the testing site, she added.

Additionally, with CHCC doing an average of 200 swabs per day at the mass testing site, Muña said that they have obtained the assistance of the

See MASS on Page 4

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

YELLOW

- Business hours: 5am - 9pm
- Curfew hours: 11pm - 5am
- Gyms open
- Mañagaha open
- Public parks closed
- Restaurants: Dine-in OK; 25% only
- Church services OK; 25% only
- Public beaches, pathway closed
- Casino, poker, e-gaming closed

LEGEND:

- **Red:** Least safe
- **Orange**
- **Yellow**
- **Blue**
- **Green:** Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

AT A GLANCE

As of 6pm, May 28, 2020

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	170	1	171
Recovered	139	4	143
Active	22	1	23
Deaths	6*	0	6*

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	22	0	22
Recovered	13	0	13
Active	7	0	7
Deaths	2	0	2
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested**	5,423		

*Total includes a sailor from the USS *Theodore Roosevelt.*

**Total count includes the number of persons tested on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Health Care Corp.

Practical guidelines as churches reopen

By IVA MAURIN
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REPORTER

As churches reopen their doors, parishioners are expected to strictly follow guidelines set by the churches and the government to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 in the CNMI.

» Churchgoers' names to be listed, in case COVID-19 contact tracing is needed

For one, parishioners who will be physically attending

See CHURCHES on Page 4

US coronavirus death toll surges past 100,000

By CARLA K. JOHNSON, SUSAN HAIGH and LISA MARIE PANE
ASSOCIATED PRESS

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP)— The U.S. surpassed a jarring milestone Wednesday in the coronavirus pandemic: 100,000 deaths.

That number is the best estimate and most assuredly an undercount. But it represents the stark reality that more Americans have died from the virus than from the Vietnam

See DEATH on Page 4

FinCEN sees apparent violations at casino

The façade of the Imperial Pacific Resort and Casino in Garapan. KRIZEL TUAZON

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The Financial Crimes Enforcement Network of the U.S. Treasury Department has notified Imperial Pacific International Holdings Ltd. and its subsidiaries about apparent violations of the Bank Secrecy Act and its implementing regulations in connection with IPI's casino operation on Saipan.

In its Annual Results for the Year ended Dec. 31, 2019, Imperial Pacific Inter-

See CASINO on Page 4

INSIDE

BUSINESS
Fifteen years later, Java Joe's in Dandan doesn't look like its slowing down anytime soon.

PAGE 13

ASIA
South Korea reports its biggest jump in coronavirus cases in more than 50 days.

PAGE 15

WORLD
The United Nations is warning that at least 14 million people could go hungry in Latin America.

PAGE 16

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Local

Luhk sisters' mysterious disappearance marks 9th year

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

File photo shows Elbert Quitugua, his mother, and his family praying during a Mass of remembrance for his granddaughters Faloma and Maleina Luhk at the St. Jude Church in Koblerville on May 24, 2018.

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The mysterious disappearance in As Teo, Saipan of sisters Faloma and Maleina Luhk marked its ninth year last Monday with still no trace of their whereabouts.

Also, due in large part to the COVID-19 pandemic, there's no Mass of special intention or remembrance for his missing grandchildren this year—a first—said Elbert Quitugua in a phone interview yesterday. "We cannot even go to church," he said.

» COVID-19 pandemic scuttles Mass of special intention for the first time

Instead, the family prayed at the makeshift shrine that they had built on the spot in As Teo where the Luhk sisters were last seen in the morning of May 25, 2011.

The family cleaned and repainted the shrine prior to last Monday.

Quitugua said it's been nine years already since that fateful morning, and that Maleina and Faloma would have been 18 and 19 years old now, respectively. "We are still praying that somebody will come forward to [give a] closure to this case," he said.

He has not heard anything from the Federal Bureau of Investigation since last year.

The family built a little shrine near a public school bus shelter along As Teo Drive corner Santa Lourdes Road in As Teo, where the Luhk sisters were last seen.

The sisters' house is located a few meters from the school bus shelter.

Faloma and Maleina were 10 and 9 years old, respectively, at the time of their disappearance. Their mother is currently in the U.S. mainland, while their father was last reported in Chuuk.

At that time, the FBI, Department of Public Safety, other law enforcers, and volunteers on Saipan combed through large swaths of Saipan for about a month to look for the sisters but no trace of their whereabouts were found.

THE OTHER EFFECT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Emergency cases down, mental health services in demand

By IVA MAURIN
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REPORTER

That the number of emergency cases at the Commonwealth Health Center has dropped is a welcome effect of the COVID-19 pandemic in the CNMI. Mental health services, on the other hand, are in demand.

This was a revelation at Wednesday's Senate public hearing for the confirmation of Dr. Martin Rohringer and Dr. Glenda S. George as members of the Health Care Professional Licensing Board.

Rohringer is the chairman of Emergency Medicine at the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp., which operates CHC, while George is Clinical Services officer at the Community Guidance Center.

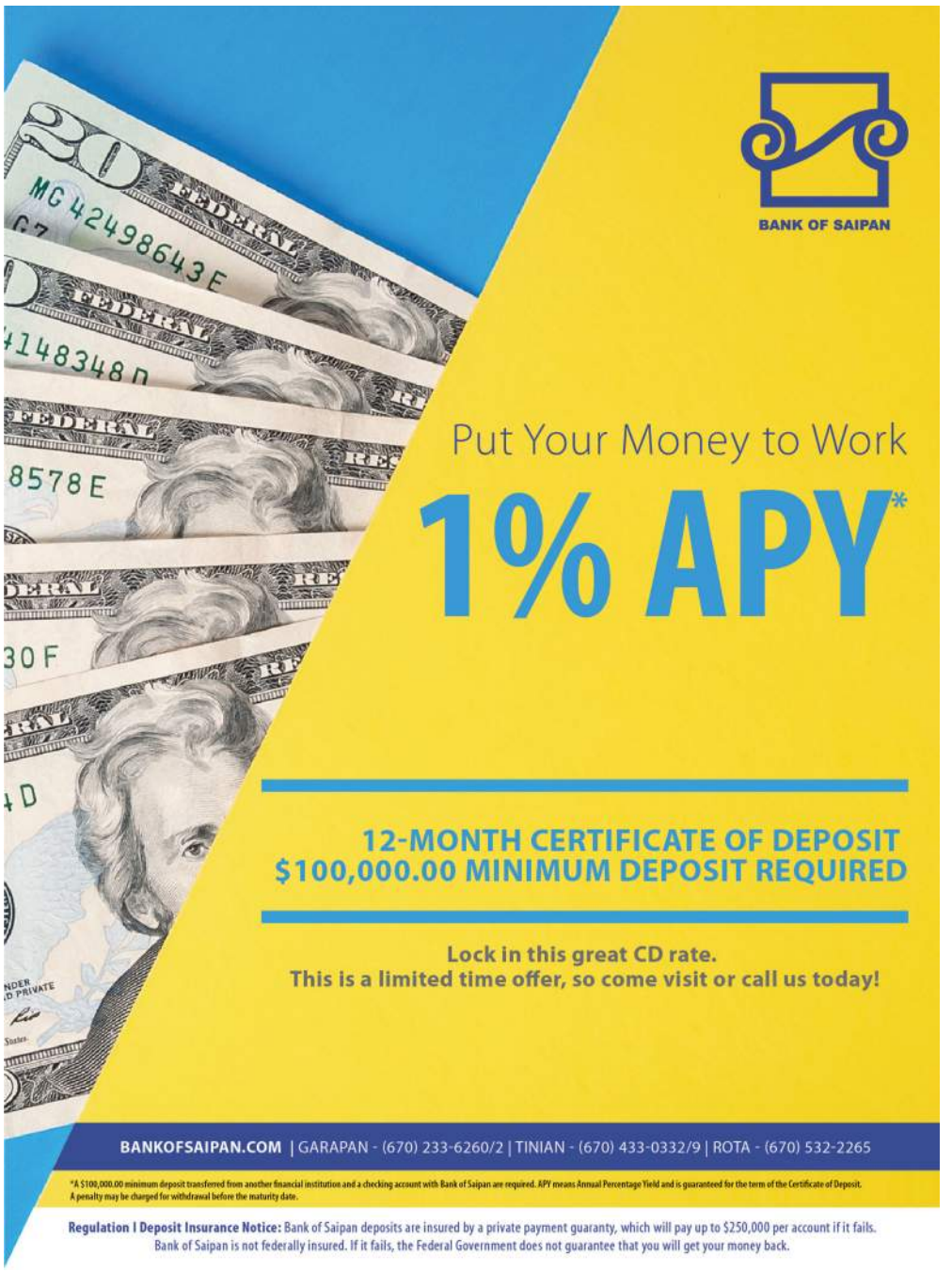
The two nominees were asked by Sen. Vinnie Sablan (Ind-Saipan) about their experiences in delivering pubic health services in the midst of the coronavirus threat on the island.

"As everyone knows, the island closed down earlier than other jurisdictions, giving us an opportunity to better prepare than some other places," Rohringer said.

He cited the makeshift hospital set up outside CHC, and the screening of emergency patients in a controlled area of the hospital as some of the measures that the CHCC has put in place to prevent the transmission of any COVID-19 infections to the hospital staff, who could then pass it to patients.

"Overall, I think because of curfews, because of social distancing, and the banning of certain activities, we actually saw a drop in emergency room patients. …Actually, our numbers, total numbers that made it to the emergency department were down," he said. "If nobody's doing anything, nobody's getting hurt. So you don't have anybody with a sprained ankle or a cut hand because they're not at

See EMERGENCY on Page 4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NY state-based company joins long list of companies suing IPI

A New York-based construction engineering and design firm has joined a long list of companies suing the Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC for alleged non-payment of services.

Sardini Group Inc., through counsel Joe W. McDoulett, is suing IPI before the federal court for breach of contract and unjust enrichment/*quantum meruit.*

Quantum meruit determines the amount to be paid for services when no contract exists or when there is doubt as to the amount due for the work performed but done under circumstances when payment is to be expected.

In its lawsuit filed Wednesday, Sardini Group asked the U.S. District Court for the NMI to hold IPI liable to pay $1.95 million in damages, plus interest, attorney's fees, and costs.

Saipan Tribune tried to obtain comments from IPI yesterday but the company refused to provide one.

McDoulett said IPI hired Sardini to produce engineering designs for the construction of the Imperial Pacific Resort and Casino in Garapan, that Sardini completed all contracted services and IPI paid $100,000 against an outstanding balance of over $2 million. Yet Sardini continued to provide services to IPI despite the lack of payment for over six months, he said, adding that Sardini endeavored in good faith to resolve this dispute prior to filing the lawsuit, but IPI refused to honor its obligations.

McDoulett stated in the complaint that this issue arose soon after Shanghai Chinafu Structural Design Inc. and IPI inked a contract on Nov. 3, 2015, for design and engineering services needed for the construction of the IPI resort and casino in Garapan.

Chinafu, and later Sardini, agreed to provide structural engineering and design services, connection design services, site engineer support services, and additional services as required for the construction project. Prior to July 11, 2016, Chinafu assigned its rights and benefits under the contract to Sardini for the "additional services" to be performed. IPI agreed to pay Sardini according to a schedule of fees of hourly rates based on the position and experience of the Sardini person performing the additional services.

On July 11, 2016, Sardini provided IPI with a summary of all services it had performed up to June 30, 2016, and a calculation of the amount owed for those services. At that time, Sardini calculated the total amount owed at $1,228,357. On Nov. 8, 2016, Sardini invoiced IPI for $200,000, representing a partial invoice of the outstanding amounts owed. On Nov. 23, 2016, IPI paid $100,000 against the Nov. 8, 2016, invoice. Despite the failure to pay the complete amount owed, IPI allegedly continued to demand additional services from Sardini, assuring Sardini that it would be paid for the additional services.

On Jan. 2, 2017, Sardini issued a second invoice in the amount of $400,000 to request another partial payment of the amount owed. Three days later, on Oct. 5, 2017, Sardini provided an updated summary of services rendered, which included all additional services provided. The new total for services provided was $1,781,207.

On Jan. 9, 2018, Sardini renewed its request for payment. IPI assured Sardini payment would be made and the company relied on this promise when it continued to provide services after Jan. 19, 2018.

On March 5, 2018, Sardini provided an updated and final summary of services rendered. The total calculated fee for the services provided up to March 5, 2018, was $2,051,127. Yet IPI has never paid Sardini after the first initial payment of $100,000,

McDoulett said. This means IPI breached the contract by failing to make full payment to Sardini for the provision of additional services as required by the contract, he said.

IPI is already facing multiple lawsuits in federal court, including the pending cases filed by Pacific Rim Land Development LLC, U.S.A. Fanter Corp. Ltd., and seven China-based former workers at IPI. Many companies and individuals also sued IPI before the Superior Court for various reasons. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Navy admiral submits results of probe on virus-infected ship

WASHINGTON (AP)— The Navy's top admiral on Wednesday received the results of an internal investigation into the spread of the coronavirus aboard the USS *Theodore Roosevelt* and the firing of the aircraft carrier's skipper in April.

The report is not expected to be made public until decisions are made about potentially restoring Capt. Brett Crozier to command of the *Roosevelt* or disciplining other officers. It was submitted Wednesday to Adm. Mike Gilday, the chief of naval operations.

A Gilday spokesman, Cmdr. Nate Christensen, said the admiral is reviewing the report.

"It will take time for the investigation's recommendations to be reviewed and endorsed by Adm. Gilday," he said.

Among the questions the investigation was to address is how the coronavirus got aboard the *Roosevelt*, which was operating in the western Pacific when the first crew members fell sick in late March. As the virus spread, the carrier pulled into Guam on March 27 amid apparent disagreement within Navy leadership over how to proceed with evacuating the crew to limit the spread.

Crozier wrote a letter, which soon leaked to a California newspaper and beyond, pleading for faster Navy action to prevent COVID-19 deaths among his crew.

The acting Navy secretary at the time, Thomas Modly, ordered Crozier relieved of command in early April, saying he had distributed his letter too widely and shown poor judgment. Days after saying Crozier may have been "too naive or too stupid" to command an aircraft carrier, Modly resigned.

About 1,100 members of the *Roosevelt* crew eventually tested positive for the coronavirus and one, Chief Petty Officer Charles Thacker, 41, died. Most have recovered from the illness, and the carrier last week departed Guam to prepare for a full return to duty in the Pacific. It was sidelined on Guam for nearly two months.

The report submitted to Gilday on Wednesday was prepared by Adm. Robert Burke, the vice chief of naval operations, who had done a preliminary inquiry in April.

But after it was reviewed up the chain of command, James McPherson, who succeeded Modly as acting Navy secretary, ordered a fuller investigation. That initial report recommended that Crozier be restored to command, but that suggestion was set aside pending the outcome of the wider probe.

McPherson will be replaced on Friday by Kenneth Braithwaite, who has been confirmed by the Senate as Navy secretary. After Braithwaite reviews the report it likely will be considered by Defense Secretary Mark Esper.

The rapidly changing leadership atop the Navy is a reflection of tumultuous times during the Trump administration. President Donald Trump's first Navy secretary, Richard Spencer, was fired in November 2019 after clashing with the White House over disciplinary actions involving a Navy SEAL.

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Fiesta Resort Guam to close for upgrades, to reopen in 2021 as Crowne Plaza Resort

Fiesta Resort Guam will accelerate its refurbishment plans and rebrand as Crowne Plaza Resort Guam by May 2021.

The fully refreshed and rebranded Crowne Plaza Resort Guam will reopen with 322 fully renovated rooms, a Club Lounge, fully refurbished public areas, and a refreshed focus on its garden, with two new swimming pools as the main feature.

And, as the world adjusts to new travel norms and expectations, Crowne Plaza Resort Guam will enhance the experience for its hotel guests by redefining cleanliness and supporting guests' personal wellbeing throughout their stay. Underpinned by the IHG Clean Promise, Crowne Plaza Resort Guam will be committed to high levels of cleanliness, which means clean, well-maintained, clutter-free rooms that meet its high standards.

"While we are naturally disappointed that the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak has meant that we've had to temporarily close Fiesta Resort Guam to guests for a while, we have decided to take the opportunity to bring our renovation project forward," said Thomas Mayrhofer, general manager at Fiesta Resort Guam. "This will mean we will be able to complete the refurbishment without needing to disrupt guests, colleagues or our community. We are delighted that Asia Pacific Hotels Inc. put their trust in IHG to manage this hotel and rebrand it as a Crowne Plaza, and we look forward to growing the resort's footprint with our world-class Crowne Plaza brand in 2021."

IHG, or InterContinental Hotels Group, announced its entry into Micronesia in October 2019, and now manages Fiesta Resort Guam and Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan, following the signing of management agreements with Asia Pacific Hotels Inc., which owns both hotels. Both resorts will undergo refurbishments and re-flag under IHG's Crowne Plaza brand.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

DEATH

From Page 1

and Korean wars combined.

"It's a striking reminder of how dangerous this virus can be," said Josh Michaud, associate director of global health policy with the Kaiser Family Foundation in Washington.

The once-unthinkable toll appears to be just the beginning of untold misery in the months ahead as Las Vegas casinos and Walt Disney World make plans to reopen, crowds of unmasked Americans swarm beaches and public health officials predict a resurgence by fall.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation's top infectious disease expert, issued a stern warning after watching video of Memorial Day crowds gathered at a pool party in Missouri.

"We have a situation in which you see that type of crowding with no mask and people interacting. That's not prudent, and that's inviting a situation that could get out of control," he said during an interview Wednesday on CNN. "Don't start leapfrogging some of the recommendations in the guidelines because that's really tempting fate and asking for trouble."

CHURCHES

From Page 1

the Masses are advised to write, on a piece of paper, their name and telephone number, the date, as well as the names of other people from the same household who will also be attending the Mass.

The Diocese of Chalan Kanoa also released some guidelines for parishioners of the Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Cathedral.

Fr. Charlie Borja, of the Santa Soledad Parish, mentioned this as a piece of advice during a KKMP interview yesterday. "There will be a basket when you enter the church where you can drop it. This is, just in case, something will happen. It will be for contact tracing."

According to Borja, the names will be entered into a logbook by the pastor, and will be treated with strict confidentiality. The logbook will only be released to the COVID-19 Task Force should it be needed for contact tracing. The records will also be destroyed after the pandemic.

Elderly and individuals with underlying medical conditions, and those who are sick with flu-like symptoms, are strongly encouraged to remain at home. The Mass will be broadcast on TV and Facebook, for those who are not able to go physically to the church.

Ushers will be guiding the parishioners to their seats as they enter the churches. Pews are arranged to observe appropriate social distancing. Families living in the same household can sit in the same pew. People are advised to wear masks. Hand sanitizers are also available at the doors.

"Once the church is filled up, then, we will ask our parishioners to stay outside, under the tent or under the tree, or you can bring your own picnic umbrella and picnic chairs to sit outside the church. There will be a speaker set up for you to hear what's happening," he added.

Parishioners are also urged to follow designated markers in the aisle. The wafers for the Holy Communion rite will be distributed by hand.

"The most important thing at this time is for us to come and worship, to come and gather for the celebration…without anything…but our spirit, our hearts, our body longing, desiring to receive the body of Christ," Borja said.

There will be no collections during the offertory. However, collection boxes are available for anyone who wishes to donate.

Veneration of relic is temporarily suspended. The guidelines also state that while it is possible to pray in front of holy images, parishioners are advised to observe proper social distancing, and to refrain from touching or kissing the images.

"We want to welcome you back this coming weekend as we celebrate the solemnity of the Pentecost. This is a fitting and meaningful celebration to welcome you back home to the church through opening our public Masses, as the Pentecost is considered the birthday of the church," Borja added.

Parishioners are advised to contact their parish churches for the Mass schedule.

CASINO

From Page 1

national Holdings Limited said that FinCEN checked its subsidiary if it was complying with the regulations of the Bank Secrecy in 2017.

The company discussed FinCEN's letter dated March 4, 2020, in its Annual Results for the Year ending Dec. 31, 2019, which the company's executive director, Cui Li Jie, filed on March 31, 2020. The company is listed in the Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Ltd. and the Stock Exchange of Hong Kong Ltd.

That FinCEN letter was among the topics discussed during yesterday's Commonwealth Casino Commission board meeting held via video conference. The letter was also discussed briefly during the CCC's board meeting last month.

Meanwhile, the CCC commissioners elected yesterday Edward Deleon Guerrero as board chairman, Rafael Demapan as vice chairman, Ramon Dela Cruz as secretary, Mariano Taitano as treasurer, and Diego Songao as public affairs officer.

In a Facebook post yesterday, Rep. Edwin Propst (Ind-Saipan) quoted Deleon Guerrero sa saying that, if IPI does not respond to the FinCEN report, then "this whole gaming industry is moot."

Propst said Rep. Tina Sablan (Ind-Saipan) brought this FinCEN report up during the confirmation hearings for CCC commissioners and that it was great to see Deleon Guerrero address it yesterday (Thursday).

FinCEN earlier fined Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino $75 million, the largest fine in FinCEN history, for violation of anti-money laundering regulations under the Bank Secrecy Act.

Propst said it appears IPI may be facing civil penalties and additional enforcement actions from FinCEN, "which could be extremely damaging, considering the fact that IPI is currently struggling just to pay its electricity bills."

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

PSS hosts virtual prom

The Public School System has arranged a virtual prom tonight, from 7pm to 10pm, to give graduating seniors a sense of normalcy.

According to Education Commissioner Dr. Alfred Ada, the prom committees of each school joined forces and shared various ideas to come up with the virtual prom. "All high schools already had prom committee way before the shutdown of schools, so the prom committees had ideas, put them together, so this [prom] is going to be different. It's going to be a virtual prom for all the high schools on the same day," he said.

The virtual prom will be open to all high schools, including private schools. PSS will send out a link to all schools who are interested.

Since the prom is virtual, Ada said it's free of charge and there will be chaperones online to filter comments.

The event is a partnership between PSS and KKMP radio station. Students will be able to request songs, request shoutouts, and more.

For those interested in watching the live stream, visit KKMP's Facebook page or listen to the prom playlist at KKPM 92.1 FM. ***(Kimberly Bautista)***

MASS

From Page 1

South Korean lab scientist, who came to the CNMI to ensure that the testing machine obtained from Seoul is working properly, to increase their testing output. This means that with the help of the South Korean lab scientist, CHCC will be able to churn out more test results.

"We will eventually get there, but it's the output that's always a challenge," said Muña. "As you get 200 [swabs] per day, you're going to eventually fall behind."

Warren Villagomez, the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force chairman, chimed in and said as Muna continues to push the efforts of testing every day, Torres is pushing the Kagman Community Health Center to "lean forward and provide resources that's needed for this community-based testing."

Villagomez said that the task force has outlined plans for Kagman, Koblerville, Garapan, and other vulnerable population, and that they will be announcing the plans shortly. "We want to make sure that there's good quality control and quality assurance," he said, "making sure that accurate results are being done for the community."

Villagomez said that the community-based testing has been going well on all three islands, as well as the construction of the Alternative Care Site at Kanoa Resort. "The Alternative Care Site is moving full throttle, to have a facility in place for our community and to serve in the event that we need its services," he said.

COVID-19 in Guam

The Department of Public Health and Social Services tested 64 individuals for COVID-19 on May 27 and one tested positive and 63 tested negative.

According to the Joint Information Center in Guam, one new probable case of COVID-19 was reported earlier to DPHSS from the Guam Regional Medical City.

To date, there have been 171 cases confirmed through COVID-19 testing in Guam, with five deaths, 143 released from isolation, and 23 active cases.

EMERGENCY

From Page 2

work, and they're observing curfews and other such things."

The numbers, however, may soon start to come up as people get back to work and start participating in activities that they are now allowed to do, with some restrictions being lifted.

Mental health care

On the other side of the coin is the demand for mental health services, which remains, many of which are "normal concerns and anxieties that come with a disaster, especially a pandemic that we don't know very much about," George said. "As far as how the community has responded, perhaps it's because this is not our first disaster, we see a lot of resilience in the community."

To respond to the need of the community for mental health service, the CHCC has been continuously offering mental health services, remote and in-person, with mental health support lines available for people to text or call (1-800-985-5990 or text 'TalkWithUs' to 66746).

"We understand that safety comes before anything so we've been promoting virtual care as much as possible. As far as those who are in quarantine, we have daily checks, as far as mental health, to ensure that people feel that they are supported when in that situation," he added.

"Face-to-face" services are also provided for those who are at high risk or have high needs. "We also have a mental support line for the community where we have people available to support anyone who has questions about mental health, when they're feeling stressed out or anxious. We want to make that available to everyone, especially for our first responders and people out there who need that," George added.

Overall successful

In terms of the CNMI's response to the pandemic, both Rohringer and George thought that the measures CHCC has put in place have produced good results.

"I think, overall, it has been a very, very successful the way our leaders at the hospital set everything up and prevented further transmission and illness," Rohringer said.

Collectively, as a community and with the leadership, George added that they have not seen "too many bumps" in the mental health team. "All in all, it's been favorable and we've had pretty good outcome," he said.

Funeral services for Lifoifoi this Saturday

Funeral services for former House speaker and Commonwealth Ports Authority board chair Jose R. Lifoifoi will be held tomorrow, Saturday.

A public viewing will be held Saturday at the Sta. Remedios Church in Tanapag before the 11am Mass. Burial will follow at the Tanapag Cemetery.

Lifoifoi's wife, Cecilia, described him as a very responsible, loving, and caring husband. "He wants to make sure that I am very happy and content," she said.

The two met in Manila, in the Philippines in the late '90s. They got married on July 10, 2009.

Lifoifoi passed away on Saipan due to cardiac arrest last May 18. He was 83.

Lifoifoi had seven children—Paterno Hocog, Angel Hocog, Joseph T. Lifoifoi (deceased), Josephine Tajibmai (deceased), Ignacia Evangelista, Remedio Pangelinan, and Joseph Lifoifoi Jr.

Sen. Teresita A. Santos (Ind-Rota), who expressed sadness about the passing of the former CPA chairman and former House speaker, described him yesterday as "a man of compassion with a distinguished personality."

"He extended his unending love and unselfish support to our communities. May our condolences bring the family comfort, and may our prayers ease the pain of the grieving family during this difficult time. Thank you for your service to our Commonwealth," the senator said.

Lifoifoi stepped down as a member of the CPA board on Jan. 7, 2019, citing health reason. He was on the board for 16 years, 14 of which as chairman.

Lifoifoi was a representative in the 4th CNMI Legislature from 1984 to 1985. He also served as speaker of the CNMI House of Representatives from 1986 to 1987. He was chairman of the United Micronesia Development Association since 2007.

Lifoifoi was a trusted friend of the late business tycoon, Larry Hillblom. He was the trustee of the Liquidating Trust of the Hillblom estate from March 2000 to March 2002. He was president of the Pacific Marine & Industrial Corp. from 1991 to June 2002.

He was Palau's honorary consul to the CNMI since Oct. 22, 2001. He was a senior adviser for the Executive Branch during the term of Pedro Tenorio as governor from 1998 to 2000. He was also a senior adviser for the CNMI and Micronesia to Guam Gov. Carl T. Gutierrez from 1995 to 2000.

Lifoifoi was the chairman for land and personal rights at the 3rd CNMI Constitutional Convention in 1995. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

CSC badly needs hearing officer

The CNMI Civil Service Commission cannot afford to hire its own hearing officer.

CSC chair Raymond Muña made this revelation last Wednesday, at the public hearing by the Senate Committee on Executive Appointments and Government Investigations, for his reappointment as a member of the commission.

"We could not afford to hire a hearing officer," he said.

Muña said this matter has already been raised with the Office of the Attorney General. "It's even difficult to try and have an attorney to represent the commission," he added.

The situation begun soon after Super Typhoon Yutu in 2018, when, according to Muña, the economy weakened. "It's costly. They are the trained experts in dealing with grievances and in dealing with appeals," he said.

At the moment, Munna said Department of Public Land's Ray Dela Cruz has been hearing CSC's cases, as the commission attempts to close out some of the cases, if not all.

The demand for a CSC hearing officer propped up following a statement from private citizen Felipe Q. Atalig, who, during the public comments, lamented how he has been waiting since 2019 relating to his appeal for being terminated by the Department of Public Works in 2018.

The biggest problem, according to Atalig, is that the OAG had directed DPW, when he got taken out, to place him on leave with pay, which DPW did not do.

"The [Pandemic Unemployment Assistance] is coming up. I cannot even assert myself that I am unemployed. I am unemployed. But my case is still pending. Until such time that the hearing officer can [come up with his] finding an analysis of the finding of facts, then I may be eligible to apply for the PUA," he said. "Right now, nothing, I am still in limbo, and that is the reason why I'm here."

Sen. Vinnie Sablan (Ind-Saipan) said at the session that the Senate could be of assistance in resolving the issue of the lack of a hearing officer.

"This body could be of some assistance, through the budget process, to actually try to help get them [hearing officer] positioned as it's very, very important that you have that position right now, especially with the anticipation of maybe more cases coming your way," Sablan told Muña.

Last month, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres announced that CNMI government employees affected by the COVID-19 pandemic are eligible for the PUA and the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation. ***(Iva Maurin)***

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USCIS preparing to resume public services on June 4

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services is preparing some domestic offices to reopen and resume non-emergency public services on or after June 4.

As services begin to reopen, offices will reduce the number of appointments and interviews to ensure social distancing, allow time for cleaning and reduce waiting room occupancy. Appointment notices will contain information on safety precautions that visitors to USCIS facilities must follow.

If you are feeling sick, do not go to your appointment. Follow the instructions on your appointment notice to reschedule your appointment for when you are healthy. There is no penalty for rescheduling your appointment if you are sick.

USCIS temporarily suspended routine in-person services at its field offices, asylum offices and application support centers last March 18 to help slow the spread of coronavirus, per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's guidelines to protect the USCIS workforce and public. For the latest information on the status of individual offices, check our office closures page.

While certain offices are temporarily closed, USCIS continues to provide limited emergency in-person services. Call the USCIS Contact Center for assistance with emergency services.

Asylum offices

USCIS asylum offices will automatically reschedule asylum interviews that were cancelled during the temporary closures. When USCIS reschedules the interview, asylum applicants will receive a new interview notice with the new time, date and location for the interview and information about safety precautions.

In accordance with social distancing guidelines, and due to the length of asylum interviews, asylum offices expect to conduct video-facilitated asylum interviews, where the applicants sit in one room and the interviewing officer sits in another room. Asylum offices will use available technology, including mobile devices provided by the agency, to ensure that the officer, applicant, interpreter and representative can fully and safely participate in the interview while maintaining social distancing.

For affirmative asylum interviews, applicants must bring all immediate family members listed as dependents on the application and an interpreter, if the applicant does not speak English. Additionally, a representative, witness, individual providing disability accommodations or "trusted adult" if an applicant is a minor, may attend the interview.

For non-detained credible or reasonable fear interviews, individuals must bring any family members listed on the interview notice. Representatives may attend credible and reasonable fear interviews but are encouraged to participate telephonically. USCIS will provide contracted, professional interpreters for credible and reasonable fear interviews.

Naturalization ceremonies

USCIS will send notices to applicants to reschedule postponed naturalization ceremonies. The ceremonies may be shorter to limit exposure to those in attendance. Instead of playing videos during naturalization ceremonies, attendees will receive a flyer with information and links directing them to the videos on the USCIS website. Under the shortened format, all legally required portions of the ceremony will take place.

Attendance is limited to the naturalization candidate and individuals providing assistance to disabled persons.

Interviews and appointments

USCIS will send notices to applicants and petitioners with previously scheduled appointments and interviews. Those attending appointments should follow the safety guidelines outlined below.

Those who had other appointments must reschedule through the USCIS Contact Center once field offices are open to the public. Please check our office closure page to see if your respective office has been reopened before calling the Contact Center.

Visitors are limited to the applicant, one representative, one family member and one individual providing disability accommodations. The applicant should arrange to have their interpreter available by phone.

Application Support Centers

USCIS will automatically reschedule any necessary ASC appointments that were cancelled due to the temporary office closure. Individuals will receive a new appointment letter in the mail with specific safety requirements. Individuals who appear at a date or time other than what is listed on the ASC appointment notice may encounter significant processing delays, except for military members.

Guidelines for entering USCIS facilities

Visitors may not enter a USCIS facility if they:

- Have any symptoms of COVID-19, including cough, fever or difficulty breathing;
- Have been in close contact with anyone known or suspected to have COVID-19 in the last 14 days; or
- Have been individually directed to self-quarantine or self-isolate by a health care provider or public health official within the last 14 days.

Visitors may not enter the facility more than 15 minutes prior to their appointment (30 minutes for naturalization ceremonies).

Hand sanitizer will be provided for visitors at entry points.

Members of the public must wear facial coverings that cover both the mouth and nose when entering facilities. Visitors may be directed to briefly remove their face covering to confirm identity or take their photograph. There will be markings and physical barriers in the facility; visitors should pay close attention to these signs to ensure they follow social distancing guidelines.

Individuals are encouraged to bring their own black or blue ink pens.

More information on visiting USCIS facilities can be found at uscis.gov/visitorpolicy. Also visit uscis.gov/coronavirus for updates. ***(PR)***

EMS WEEK KRIZEL TUAZON

First responders from the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services line a section of Beach Road yesterday afternoon, May 28, as part of the observance of EMS Week. Passing cars showed their gratitude to the men and women at DFEMS by honking their horns.

RODNEY S. CABARLES, Chairman · JOSEPH T. SAN NICOLAS, Vice Chairman · JOVITA SN. PAULINO, Secretary/Treasurer · BOARD MEMBER, Vacant · BOARD MEMBER, Vacant

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E-Mail: tinianscholarship@gmail.com
Telephone: (670) 433-2200 | Facsimile: (670) 433-1819

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9910(a), the Tinian Municipal Scholarship Board hereby gives notice that there will be a Special Meeting on Saturday, May 30, 2020 at 9:30 a.m., at the Tinian Public Library, San Jose Village Tinian.

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY
- A. Call to Order
- B. Roll Call
- C. Adoption of Agenda
- D. Adoption of Minutes February 27, 2020

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS
III. NEW BUSINESS
- **A.** Review of all Pending Spring 2020 Applicants
- **B.** Administrative Matters

IV. MISCELLANEOUS
V. SCHEDULE OF NEXT BOARD MEETING
VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION
VII. ADJOURNMENT

/s/ Rodney S. Cabarles
Chairman

[1]We ask that remarks be limited to 3 minutes each. Everyone is welcomed to submit written comments on the day of the meeting.
[2]Pursuant to 1 CMC section 9912, the Board may vote to meet in executive session at any time.
[3]Individuals with special needs requiring special accommodations, please contact the TMSB office at least 48 hours prior to schedule meeting for assistance.

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF Gregorio Cabrera Deleon Guerrero
CA NO. 20-0103
SUA SPONTE ORDER
Petition for Letters of Administration
DATE: June 25, 2020
TIME: 10:00 a.m.
JUDGE: Judge Joseph N. Camacho

FOR GOOD CAUSE, because of the CNMI Supreme Court COVID Order No. 2 (Effective April 4, 2020 to June 5, 2020) issued on April 1, 2020, the following case that is currently set for May 14, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. before Judge Joseph N. Camacho is now moved to June 25, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. All parties are ordered to appear.

SO ORDERED this 2nd day of April 2020.

/s/
JOSEPH N. CAMACHO, Associate Judge

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF CONCEPCION FAISAO TUDELA Deceased.
Civil Action No. 20-0116-CV
NOTICE OF HEARING AND NOTICE TO CREDITORS
DATE: June 25, 2020
TIME: 10:00 am
JUDGE: Joseph N. Camacho

TO: THE GENERAL PUBLIC, ANY HEIRS, CLAIMANTS, OR CREDITORS OF THE LATE CONCEPCION FAISAO TUDELA OR HER ESTATE:

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Esther Milne has petitioned the Superior Court of Northern Marianas Islands to admit into probate the Last Will and Testament, to issue Letters of Administration and to appoint an Executor for the **ESTATE OF CONCEPCION FAISAO TUDELA**, the deceased. The attorney for Petitioner is Robert T. Torres, Attorney at Law, whose address is Plata Drive, Whispering Palms (Chalan Kiya) P.O. Box 503758, Saipan, MP 96950.

The hearing on the Petition is scheduled to be heard on the date at the time set forth above at the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands. All interested persons and entities should appear at the hearing.

Any and all persons, creditors, or entities having claims against the deceased or her Estate are hereby required by the law to file their claims with the Clerk of Court within sixty (60) days of this publication or claim(s) will be barred. A copy of your claims should also be sent to ROBERT T. TORRES, Attorney at Law, at the above address.

Respectfully submitted this 7th day of April 2020.

/s/_____
Clerk of Court / Deputy Clerk

ROBERT TENORIO TORRES F0197
ATTORNEY AT LAW
P.O. Box 503758 CK
Saipan, MP 96950
Tel. (670) 234-7859
Fax. (670) 234-5749
E mail: robert.torres@rttlawgroup.com

Attorney for Petitioner Bertha C. Leon Guerrero

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF MARCELINO DLG. CAMACHO Deceased.
Civil Action No. 20-0117-CV
NOTICE OF HEARING AND NOTICE TO CREDITORS
DATE: June 25, 2020
TIME: 10:00 a.m.
JUDGE: Joseph Norita Camacho

TO: THE GENERAL PUBLIC, ANY HEIRS, CLAIMANTS, OR CREDITORS OF THE LATE MARCELINO DLG. CAMACHO OR HIS ESTATE:

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Bertha C. Leon. Guerrero ("Petitioner") has petitioned the Superior Court to issue Letters of Administration and to appoint petitioner as administratrix of the **ESTATE OF MARCELINO DLG. CAMACHO**, the deceased. The attorney for Petitioner is Robert T. Torres, Attorney at Law, whose address is Plata Drive, Whispering Palms (Chalan Kiya) P.O. Box 503758, Saipan, MP 96950.

The hearing on the Petition is scheduled to be heard on the date at the time set forth above at the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands. Allinterested persons and entities should appear at the hearing.

Any and all persons, creditors, or entities having claims against the deceased or his Estate are hereby required by the law to file their claims with the Clerk of Court within sixty (60)days of this publication or claim(s) will be barred. A copy of your claims should also be sent to ROBERT T. TORRES, Attorney at Law, at the above address.

Respectfully submitted this _day of April 2020.

__/s/_____
CLERK OF COURT/DEPUTY CLERK

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NO PHONE INQUIRIES PLEASE.
CLOSING DATE: WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10, 2020 AT 4:00PM

SIS musical goes virtual

Saipan International School creates a virtual musical video that also became a contest.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan International School did not let COVID-19 cancel its beloved annual musical this month, with classmates, family, and friends collaborating to create a virtual musical video that also became a contest.

In an eclectic mix of entries that included Tik-Tok dances, family dance routines, and staff meeting lip-synching, the SIS community came together to sing, dance, play musical instruments, and provide messages of humor and hope.

The virtual contest was sponsored by two restaurants—The Shack and Spicy Thai Noodle Place—who offered awards to winning entries.

Videos were uploaded to the Award Force platform, which allowed for community members to vote on their favorite entry in a People's Choice category, and for selected judges to assess the best performance in each category: elementary, middle, high school, alumni, and family and friends.

"The virtual musical made me realize that anything is possible. No virus can diminish the Gecko spirit," said kindergarten director Pam Villadores-Walsh.

Winners included:

■ Elementary: Ms. Kathy's "Dance Monkey"

■ Middle school: 8th grade "Radioactive"

■ High School: 9th grade "9th Grade Musical Video"

■ Family + Friends: Casa de Song's "New Face"

■ Alumni: SIS Teacher's Past with "We Are Family"

■ People's Choice: Ms. Pam's Pre-K and Kindergarten "Zumba Dance"

For the last 20 years, each SIS class would perform a musical act for the customary school event, typically held at a local resort. This year, the musical was scheduled to be held at Saipan World Resort and would have paid tribute to SIS musicals from the past. The pandemic canceled that plan.

"One thing we've learned," SIS headmaster Ron Snyder said, "is sometimes you have to change your approach to a fixed idea."

See a highlight of the musical submissions in this SIS highlight reel: https://www.saipaninternationalschool.com/sis-blog/sisvirtualmusical

SIS is open for enrollment in fall 2020: https://www.saipaninternationalschool.com/how-to-apply. ***(PR)***

MCS employees advance professional capacities

Mount Carmel School fourth-grade teacher Claire Cabrera, school president Dr. Galvin Deleon Guerrero, and office manager Leeani Villagomez recently advanced in their capacity as educators through graduate degrees and professional certification.

Cabrera earned her master's degree in international teaching through the partnership between Northern Marianas College and Framingham State University. "I pursued my graduate degree because I wanted to learn more about teaching and to acquire new skills that would make me a better educator," said Cabrera. "I would like to thank Mount Carmel School for their support and understanding. I didn't start my educational journey with the Mount Carmel School family, but I am proud to say that I am closing this journey as a Knight. With the prayers, words of encouragement and a helping hand from my colleagues, the staff, and administrators, I was able to keep my focus and finish."

Deleon Guerrero, EdD, also earned distinction as a certified trainer for Edmodo. The certification was granted after Deleon Guerrero completed a rigorous online course that provided participants with an understanding of how to teach others to create and engage in flexible digital learning spaces with Edmodo. In addition to exploring various Edmodo features, the course covered a wide range of pedagogical concepts related to online learning, including blended learning, flipped classrooms, social-emotional learning, differentiated instruction, gamification, and project-based learning.

In granting Deleon Guerrero the certification, Kate Baker, Edmodo's senior community engagement manager, wrote, "We are impressed with your dedication and inspired by the variety of ways you use Edmodo to engage your students and colleagues."

In addition, Villagomez continues to advance in her professional capacity by enrolling into Southern New Hampshire University's online program. She is currently an art and design major. Prior to working at MCS, Villagomez earned her associate degree in liberal arts at Northern Marianas College in 2017. "Earning my bachelor's degree in art has always been a personal goal of mine," said Villagomez. "I am also happy to have been able to expedite my graduation date (2022) because all my credits from NMC transferred."

As for balancing a full-time job and her studies, Villagomez said it can be a challenge, "but I'm passionate about these aspects in my life. …I look forward to applying what I've been learning into my work at MCS and throughout my career."

Mount Carmel School has extended its Early Bird Registration to June 5, 2020. To learn more MCS and its academic programs, visit www.mountcarmelsaipan.com. ***(PR)***

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NOTICE OF BOARD COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Commonwealth Ports Authority hereby gives notice that there will Board Committee Meetings on Wednesday, June 03, 2020, beginning 9:30 a.m. in the Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) Classroom at the Airport Fire Station, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, Saipan.

AGENDA

FINANCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

I. Call to Order, Roll Call, Adoption of Agenda, Adoption of Minutes (March 12, 2020)
II. Public Comments
III. Old Business:
  1. Star Marianas Air
  2. Draft Fiscal Year 2021 Budget
IV. New Business:
  1. Financial Affairs Committee Report
V. Executive Session (if needed)
VI. Miscellaneous/Announcements
VII. Adjournment

AIRPORT FACILITIES COMMITTEE

I. Call to Order, Roll Call, Adoption of Agenda, Adoption of Minutes (March 12, 2020)
II. Public Comments
III. Old Business:
  1. Solar updates
  2. Mobil
  3. Lease: United Cargo Facility
IV. New Business:
  1. Airport Facilities Committee Report
V. Executive Session (if needed)
VI. Miscellaneous/Announcements
VII. Adjournment

SEAPORT FACILITIES COMMITTEE

I. Call to Order, Roll Call, Adoption of Agenda, Adoption of Minutes (March 12, 2020)
II. Public Comments
III. Old Business:
  1. Industrial Drive status update
  2. Tinian Marine Stevedore
  3. Saipan Stevedore Lease
IV. New Business:
  1. Resolution 2020-05: To honor Jose R. Lifoifoi and Naming of the Port of Saipan
  2. Seaport Facilities Committee Report
V. Executive Session (if needed)
VI. Miscellaneous/Announcements
VII. Adjournment

PERSONNEL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

I. Call to Order, Roll Call, Adoption of Agenda, Adoption of Minutes (March 12, 2020)
II. Public Comments
III. Old Business- None.
IV. New Business:
  1. Personnel Affairs Committee Report
V. Executive Session (if needed)
VI. Miscellaneous/Announcements
VII. Adjournment

In line with the Governor's COVID-19 Directive to practice social distancing, we will stream these meetings live on Facebook. Be sure to like the "Commonwealth Ports Authority" Facebook page to view the live coverage. Persons are welcome to submit written or oral testimony on the agenda items.

Barrie C. Toves, Airport Facilities Chair | Ramon A. Tebuteb, Financial Affairs Chair | Pete P. Reyes, Seaport Facilities Chair | Joseph M. Diaz, Personnel Affairs Chair

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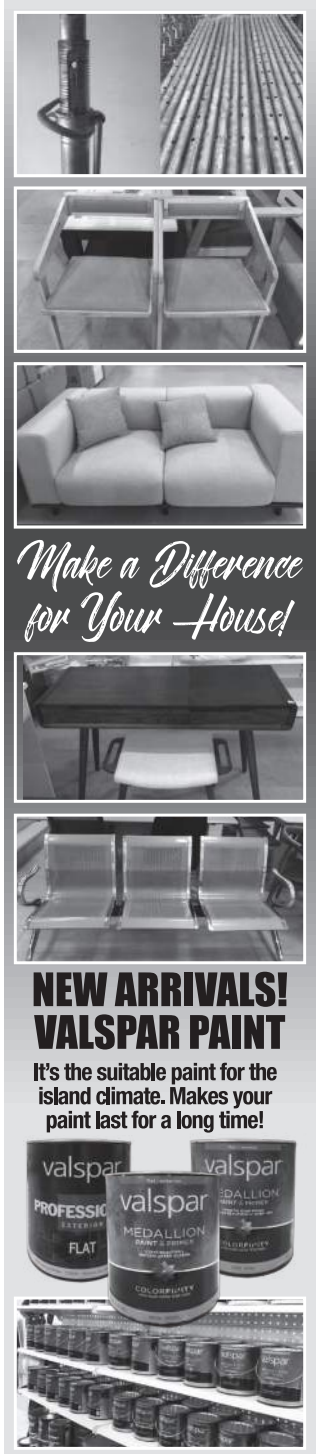
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Three traditional navigators in Guam virtual conference

GUAM EPSCOR/KATIE MAFNAS

File photo shows Larry Raigetal, founder of Waa'gey in Yap, teaching a course on traditional navigation.

OLYNESIAN VOYAGING SOCIETY

File photo shows Nainoa Thompson, president of the Polynesia Voyaging Society in Hawaii, navigating on the Hôkûle`a, a traditional double-hulled voyaging canoe, in a recent four-year voyage around the world.

The impacts of climate change and health emergencies expose both the vulnerability and resilience of islands. As repositories of ancient wisdom, islands carry lessons that can address some of the world's most pressing challenges. How can islands help navigate the way to a sustainable global future?

Traditional navigators will lead the discussion, when the University of Guam Virtual Conference Series on Island Sustainability continues today at 9am. Registration is of no charge at www.uog.edu/cis2020.

The fifth week of the series is titled "Ancient Winds Navigating Tomorrow." Rita P. Nauta, managing director of Guampedia, will moderate the panel, featuring:

■ Larry Raigetal, co-founder of Waa'gey in Lamotrek Atoll, Yap;

■ Nainoa Thompson, president of the Polynesian Voyaging Society in Hawaii;

■ Vicente Diaz, founder and director of the Native Canoe Program at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities.

Raigetal co-founded Waa'gey, a community-based organization that "uses traditional skills to confront the social, economic, and environmental challenges faced by the people of Micronesia's most remote outer islands." Raigetal is an accomplished master canoe carver and a weriyang pwo navigator. He serves as an instructor with UOG Sea Grant, teaching courses on traditional navigation and climate change adaptation and was the keynote speaker for the 2019 CIS Conference. Raigetal previously served as a diplomat within the Federated States of Micronesia and holds a master's degree in international relations from Oxford University.

Thompson is a pwo (master) navigator and the first native Hawaiian since the 14th century to practice wayfinding—the art and science of ancient non-instrument navigation—for long-distance ocean voyaging. He recently completed a four-year voyage around the world on the Hōkūle`a, a traditional double-hulled voyaging canoe. Through these travels, Thompson and his crew engaged with thousands of people, including world leaders to highlight the importance of ocean resources, cultural legacies, and protection of these critical places in the future.

Diaz is of Filipino and Pohnpeian descent and was born and raised in Guam. He conducts community-based research and learning in indigenous canoe culture and knowledge in ways that partner disparate indigenous communities' work in cultural and political resurgence with innovative relationships across humanities, social science, and STEM research. His most known project on "trans-indigenous" knowledge, politics, and relations also involves virtual and augmented reality development. Diaz holds a doctorate in history of consciousness from the University of California, Santa Cruz.

So far, the conference series has featured a distinguished lineup of speakers from across the globe on topics including COVID-19 impacts in island communities, clean energy, and the circular economy.

Last week, the conference featured CIS SEED Talks: Ideas Worth Cultivating. The program featured change-makers from the inaugural cohort of the Obama Foundation's Leaders: Asia-Pacific Program, along with Maya Soetoro, co-founder and senior advisor for the Institute for Climate and Peace in Hawaii and consultant to the Obama Foundation.

The virtual conference series continues to garner more viewers every week, with 1,200+ total participation over Zoom, 60-plus countries, states, and territories represented, and 8,900-plus views on social media. The virtual conference series will continue every Friday for the next few weeks. All sessions are available to view on the UOG Tritons YouTube channel at https://www.youtube.com/user/UOGTritons. ***(PR)***

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

File photo shows Vicente Diaz, left, positioning a model of a traditional canoe for a photo.

ON THE NET

https://www.youtube.com/user/UOGTritons

NAP households must report stimulus checks, lump sum payments

The CARES Act provision for a refundable tax credit, widely known as the "stimulus checks," is a payment that is countable as a resource for Nutrition Assistance Program eligibility.

Resources for NAP eligibility are considered bank accounts such as checking or savings account, cash on hand, including non-recurring lump-sum payments. A stimulus payment that was received by a NAP household is considered a resource and must be reported to the NAP office. A household which consists of members who are below the age of 54 years old must not have resources exceeding the threshold of $2,250.00 per month. A household who has at least one member who is 55 years or older must not exceed a threshold of $3,500.00.

The CNMI government issued the federal stimulus payments earlier this month. Additionally, government employees such as teachers have received lump sum payments for salaries due to them, also this month of May 2020.

Under the NAP regulations, these payments are regarded as resources. As a courtesy, the NAP office is reminding households about their responsibility as NAP recipients to report, within 10 business days, household changes that affect their current approved applications. Every household who has gone through an interview with a NAP case worker was informed about this requirement. Such requirement was also specifically stated in the orientation packet acknowledged by every applicant household.

A NAP household who has received a stimulus payment and/or lump sum payment of their salaries must indicate the amount they received, the date they received it, and the funds that remains unspent.

If at the end of May 2020, any funds from the stimulus payment and/or from a lump sum payment has not been spent, it will be verified against the NAP resources limit. If those unspent funds exceed the resources limits, such household will be considered ineligible for the month of May 2020. Additionally, if those unspent funds exceed the resources threshold in June, similarly the household will be considered ineligible for June 2020, and so forth.

Lump-sum payment of earnings

Furloughed government employees and private sector employees who are receiving NAP benefits must also report any payments they recently received that was not previously reported in their recent NAP application. These payments are considered changes to either income or resources and must be reported to the NAP Office for a possible adjustment in their benefits or ineligibility for benefits. Failure to report any changes for their currently certified NAP application could result in the return of benefits issued to them. The 10 business days reporting requirement is the grace period the DCCA-NAP would like to remind NAP households of this responsibility.

How to report changes

To ease the process for households, a form labeled: NAP Client Reporting of Stimulus and Earnings Payment was created for reporting changes particularly for changes in household resources. The form can be downloaded from the DCCA website www.dcca.gov.mp or the form can be picked up the NAP Certification Unit office at the JTV Commercial Building, ground floor in As Lito. The form can be submitted anytime via the drop box at the As Lito office or via the NAP email at support@cnminap.gov.mp.

Households with NAP certifications expiring in June 2020 are required to renew the cases

The DCCA-NAP would like to remind households whose certifications are expiring in June 2020 are required to submit a new application for renewal in order to receive benefits for July 2020 and onwards. Households should submit their applications for renewal as soon as possible to avoid delays from receiving their benefits.

To receive an application, households can visit the NAP Certification Unit office in As Lito or visit the DCCA website at www.dcca.gov.mp. Applications must be submitted to the NAP Certification Unit office drop box at the ground floor of the JTV Commercial Building in As Lito. Applications can be submitted anytime via the drop box.

For questions regarding applications or renewals contact the NAP Certification Unit at 237-2801 or 237-2802. ***(PR)***

From working at sea to working on cars

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrersasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

SPOTLIGHT

Sometime ago, while driving along Isa Drive, a white and red car parked in somebody's garage caught my attention and it was hard to unsee it. I knew it was a vintage car but I didn't know what kind. It was a sight that you only see in television and movies these days.

Thanks to the law of attraction, I finally saw up close this shiny, beyond mint, 1955 Century Buick one Saturday afternoon at a gasoline station and thought this was my chance to meet the driver and owner. I asked him if we could talk about the car, I got a yes, and permission to set foot in the garage that I used to see from afar.

His name is David Michael Rodak. Originally from North Carolina, he has made Saipan his home for the past 10 years. I found him engaging. "I was a merchant marine and was working on the ships out there. I lived in Hawaii and my ship came here, I thought this is so much nicer and cheaper than Hawaii… not all congested. …And this beauty with me is 'Driving Miss Daisy,'" he said, "a 66-year-old Century Buick, all original, all stock, still drives from zero to 100 miles an hour and she is mine. …I still have to take her to the next level and that is to repaint. She is still wearing her original paint and nobody makes them anymore," he added.

The 1955 Century Buick is known as the "Hot Rod" Buick. A hot rod car back in the day is a car that has been specifically modified to give it extra power and speed. "When it came out, it cost $2,963 to own a brand-new model. …It was made to be bigger and quieter than a Cadillac. …The model name 'Century' was based on the car's ability to cruise 100 mph," Rodak said.

He said that cars and motorcycles are his passion even as a kid. "I have this mentality that if I couldn't fix the car, then I couldn't afford to drive the car and I didn't own a car until I was 29 years old. I was always into Harley Davidson motorcycles and the car guys would always ask me to fix their cars, so I finally decided to get an old car or truck," Rodak said.

David Michael Rodak poses with a 1965 Buick Century Classic that he fondly calls "Driving Miss Daisy," after a 1989 American movie with the same name that featured Jessica Tandy, Morgan Freeman, and Dan Aykroyd.
BEA CABRERA

He found Driving Miss Daisy on Craigslist—an American sales advertisement website—four years ago and knew that he had to have her. "I was looking for a 1952 Cadillac but found her instead. I bought it from Bill Gates' neighborhood in Seattle, Washington. …I flew from Saipan to Seattle, took a cab to the house where it was for sale and drove it away. I drove it cross-country from Washington state to San Diego, went up Route 66 and on the east, west, south and north coasts and finally shipped it here," he said.

At that time, he was with the merchant marines and, while waiting for his ship to pick him up, he would usually stay in a hotel room. In San Francisco, he was paying between $100 to $140 a night and sometimes he would have to be there for 30 days. "I also bought this car because it is big enough so I can sleep in it," he said.

Rodak is now retired and spends most of his days on a couple of projects—reassembling, reviving, and re-upholstering his 1965 Corvette, Bronco pick-up, and his 1967 Harley Davidson Police Special. "I was a chief cook and baker on the ship that loved engines on wheels. My mother owned a restaurant, my father was a welding engineer, and I grew up in that environment. That's what I know how to do and what I love to do," he said.

"It is kind of weird to be retired because it is happy hour all the time and you can do whatever you want. …I have a bond with cars and motorcycles because we are both old, we try to take care of ourselves and wake up each morning because we are part of history," he added.

Before ending the interview, I spotted a white dog sitting behind the line of plants as if listening to our conversation. Rodak said the dog's name is Speedy. Speedy was in in good spirits as he approached us and I couldn't help but notice that he was dragging his lower body.

"Speedy was hit in the pelvis by a door that had fallen when Super Typhoon Soulelor hit," Rodak said.

As a dog lover myself, I felt sad about that but Rodak said not to worry. "He has wheels that I made and that's why he still lives up to his name."

I still drive by Rodak's house along Isa Drive and I get giddy when I see Driving Miss Daisy's hood up. I know Rodak is somewhere under, over, or inside the car, tinkering and making it better and I remember Rodak's words. "If I can go and fix them up and maybe sell them, I will. I get to keep busy, can't just sit down, and why stop doing something? That's when the rust sits in and next thing you know you are in the bone yard."

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
Tel: (670) 664-2371 | Fax: (670) 664-2408 | Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATION STATEMENTS
RFQ20-GOV-068

Request for Qualification for Provisions of Architect/ Engineering Services
702 CIP Project Management Services

Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lt. Governor Arnold I. Palacios through the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Office, (collectively, "**Commonwealth**") are soliciting sealed proposals from Architects and Engineers to provide Project Management Services for the Capital Improvement Projects funded under the 702 Covenant Funding.

Procurement procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, dated May 24, 2001, or latest revision thereof. Public Law 15-95 (Local Preference Act) as amended by Public Law 15-118 does not apply to this Federally funded project. All wage rates for employees performing the work, labor and services on this project shall be paid at the current U.S. prevailing wage rates established for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

Selected Architects and Engineers (Project Managers) will be retained as independent contractors under the General Provision of the Contracting Officer or his designee. Project Managers will act as agents of the expenditure authority on assigned Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) to ensure that identified objectives are achieved within cost, time and legal requirements while maintaining effective stakeholder communications. Selected Project Managers will be retained of a one year contract with an option to renew for an additiional year at the discretion of the Commonwealth. Project Managers include Architects, Civil, Mechanical, Electrical Engineers, Geotechnical and Environmental Consultant.

Compensation for Project Managers services will be determined based on the number of assigned projects including payments for appoved staff and expenses. The Commonwealth will negotiate with the selected Project Managers to determine the scope of work and responsibilities. Individuals or firms selected as project managers would be precluded from providing any other services as a prime consultant advertised under the Capital Improvement Program.

Interested parties may pick up the applicable scope of work (SOW) and submittal requirements at the Office of Capital Improvement Program Office, Office of the Governor, Juan A. Sablan Building, Capitol Hill, Saipan, beginning May 13, 2020 during working hours 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. – (Monday through Friday, except on holiday). Submittal of all qualifications must precisely follow the submittal requirements identified in the Scope of Work and Submittal Requirements.

Selection of individuals or firms for the provision of services shall be guided by the Commonwealth Department of Finance Division of Procurement & Supply, Procurement Regulations § 7070-30.3-305. To qualify, firms must have a valid CNMI Business License, currently licensed to practice engineering in the CNMI, and must hold a Certificate of Authorization, if applicable.

Statements of qualification must be presented by a combination of both brochures and the use of current U.S. Government Standard Form 330 or the latest version of Standard Forms. Only professionally licensed firms with a valid CNMI business license will be considered. Statement of Qualifications will be evaluated and scored based on the following criteria:

1. Qualifications of personnel or sub-consultants – 40%
2. Past Experience and Performance as a Project Manager – 40%
3. Project Methodology – 20%
4. Fee Proposal – 0%

Discussions shall be conducted with the top three (3) ranked firms or with all the firms. After a selection is made, negotiations will be conducted with the highest qualified firm to determine the final fair and reasonable price of the contract for the work to be performed. The selected firm will be subjected to a responsibility and responsiveness determination in compliance with Section 3-301 of the CNMI Procurement Regulations. Questions regarding this RFQ must be in writing and submitted to Ms. Nerissa Benavente at nerissa.cip@gmail or fax number 670-664-2408.

Qualifications statements must be sealed and marked "RFQ20-GOV-068", **Project Management Services for the 702 CIP Projects**". For proposers within the CNMI, one original and one (1) copy of the qualification statement and in electronic form (USB) must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply, Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP, **no later than 9:00 a.m., on June 8, 2020**. Proposers located outside the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their proposal by submitting a Notice of Intent to Propose. Notices of Intent to Propose must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply **no later than 9:00 a.m., ChST, on June 8, 2020** and may be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to procurement@cmnidof.net. For proposers located outside the CNMI, one original and one (1) copy of the sealed qualifications statement and in electronic (USB) must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than June 8, 2020, and must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply **no later than 9:00 a.m., ChST on June 17, 2020**. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies of the proposal may be cause for rejection of a proposal.

BREACH OF ETHICAL STANDARDS
(To be part of Solicitation for Quotes, ITBs, RFPs and RFQs)

• Gratuities. It shall be a breach of ethical standards for any person to offer, give or agree to give any employee or former employee, or for any employee or former employee to solicit, demand, accept or agree to accept from another person, a gratuity or an offer of employment in connection with any decision, approval, disapproval, recommendation, preparation of any part of a program requirement or a purchase request, influencing the content of any specification or procurement standard, rendering of advice, investigation, auditing or in any other advisory capacity in any proceeding or application, request for ruling, determination, claim or controversy, or other particular matter, pertaining to any program requirement or a contract or subcontract or to any solicitation or proposal therefore. NMIAC Section 70-30.3-725(a).

• Kickbacks. It shall be a breach of ethical standards for any payment, gratuity or offer of employment to be made by or on behalf of a subcontractor under a contract to the prime contractor or higher tier subcontractor or any person associated therewith as an inducement for the award of subcontractor or order. NMIAC Section 70-30.3-725(b)

• Contingent Fees. It shall be a breach of ethical standards for a person to be retained, or to retain a person, to solicit or secure government contracts upon an agreement or understanding for a commission, percentage, brokerage or contingent fee, except for retention of bona fide employees or bona fide established commercial selling agencies for the purpose of securing business. NMIAC Section 70-30.3-730.

The Commonwealth reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to waive any imperfections in any proposal if, in its opinion to do so would be in the best interests of the CNMI government. All proposals shall become the sole property of the CNMI government.

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Ralph DLG. Torres
Governor

Francisco C. Aguon
Acting Director, Procurement & Supply

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

INVITATION FOR BID
CUC-IFB-20-016

Supply and Services for Installation & Commissioning of One Brand New Cummins Diesel Engine with a Capacity to Generate 2.0 MW

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC), is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified and experienced firms for the Equipment Supply and Services (Design, Engineering and Supervision - Installation, Testing, Commissioning, Training and Handover) of 1 complete new engine system. Bidders must note that new Cummins engine will replace Cummins engine no. 3 at the CUC Rota Power Plant in the island of Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Island.

The solicitation seeks responses from qualified ORIGINAL EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURERS (OEM's) or ORIGINAL EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURE'S AUTHORIZED DISTRIBUTOR from which CUC intends to select one Bidder and enter into a contract agreement for CUC's power supply requirements.

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non- refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $200.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

A Pre-bid Conference will be conducted at the CUC Rota Administration Office in Sinapalo, Rota on **June 4, 2020 at 10:00 AM (ChST)**. Immediately after the conference, a Site Visit to Power Plant No. 1 facility will be conducted. Prospective Bidders shall familiarize themselves with the site conditions prior to submitting their bid.

One (1) original and five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUCIFB- 20-016" Supply and Services for Installation & Commissioning of One Brand New Cummins Diesel Engine with a Capacity to Generate 2.0 MW"** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **June 22, 2020 at 10:00 AM (ChST).** Submissions, in PDF, must also be emailed to the addresses as noted in the IFB. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

A *Bid Guarantee* of fifteen (15%) percent of the total Bid price must accompany the Bid. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A *Payment Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent and a *Performance Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful Bidder. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, for the protection of all persons supplying labor and material to the contractor or its subcontractors for the performance of the work provided for in the contract.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). Proposers are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.

All Bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the Bidder due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid or supply under the contract. The IFB does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the bid under this request, or to procure or contract for services. Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All responses to this IFB should take into account any and all taxes, including excise tax, which will become the obligation of the proponent awarded a contract. Successful proponents will be required to submit a copy of a valid CNMI Business license in compliance with the Contractor's Registration and Licensing Laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, upon award of the contract. The Contractor and all subcontractors will be obligated to pay wage rates not less than the current CNMI minimum wage, prevailing through the period of contract, as indicated in the web page: https://marianaslabor.net/. The proponents shall be required to comply with all applicable CNMI and Federal Laws.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered Prospective Bidders and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on June 5, 2020** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Officer via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Christie Sablan, Purchasing Technician, Senior via email address christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bidders for any reason and to waive any defects in said bid package, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
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EDITORIAL

Internet disconnect: Pandemic amplifies broadband access limits

Working from home and online learning have become the norm during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has shuttered offices and schools. What has also become clear, unfortunately, is that millions of Americans are at an extreme disadvantage caused by limited internet access in their communities.

Just as roads, bridges and dams are important parts of the nation's infrastructure needs, so too is reliable high-speed internet access. Congress must commit funding for programs that improve service to those parts of the country where it is lacking.

The Pew Research Center found that 1 in 4 Americans has no high-speed internet access at home, either because the residence is in a rural area with limited service or because service is too expensive.

An 11-month study by Penn State researchers in 2018 found that more than half of Pennsylvania's residents did not have access to the minimum broadband connection. In neighboring Ohio, more than 300,000 households do not have broadband access.

That has created a multitude of problems during the pandemic, especially for students whose coursework has shifted to online during stay-at-home directives.

Elected officials across the country have been suggesting that people use Wi-Fi access at libraries, schools, nonprofits and other organizations that still offer connectivity. In some parts of the country, that means students and teachers are completing coursework while sitting in cars in parking lots where internet access is available.

Rural school districts have attempted to address the access issue during the pandemic by equipping school buses with internet hot spots and driving them to central locations so students can access schoolwork.

For many students, learning has shifted over the past two months from classrooms to homes to parking lots. The educational process is bound to suffer from the disruption.

Congress recently passed legislation requiring the Federal Communications Commission to collect more detailed information from broadband providers and develop more accurate mapping of areas with limited or no service. What's needed next is funding to bring service to those areas.

In the meantime, parking lots at schools, libraries and businesses that kept their connection active have become lifelines for those who can't connect at home.

The shutdown of schools and businesses during this pandemic has magnified how dependent we have become on a reliable internet connection as part of our daily routine. The focus has been on education because of the school closings, but businesses can succeed with work-from-home plans only if their employees have internet access as well.

This should be a wake-up call for the need of a federal commitment to expanding internet service nationwide.

(c)2020 *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

Mother... Where are you going?
STAY GET AWAY from me!
shopping with her girl friends for the first time in over three months!
READY TO RETURN TO THE NEW NORMAL?
©2020 JAMBLE KING FEATURES SYNDICATE, INC.

Americans have never liked being told what to do

By RON GROSSMAN
Chicago Tribune

Ron Grossman is a reporter and columnist for the Chicago Tribune.

Long before armed opponents of Michigan's quarantine marched on its state Capitol, a similarly vexatious problem landed on the desk of a newly inaugurated George Washington.

Americans have never liked being told what they can't do.

Today's protesters are angered by stay-at-home orders intended to curb the COVID-19 pandemic. Those who carried rifles in Washington's era resented a tax on whiskey instituted in 1791 to amortize the cost of the Revolutionary War.

It was anathema to farmers who found it more profitable to distill the grain they grew than to sell it or grind it into flour. The government insisted the tax was needed to pay off its debts.

That impasse triggered the Whiskey Rebellion, a bloody insurrection that Washington put down with federal troops. The confrontation revealed a psychological gap between the governors and the governed that is with us still.

To those who sit in halls of power, government's necessity is self-evident. Without it, how would roads get built and the country defended?

Many workaday Americans have a different take on government: At best, it's a necessary evil. Even better would be no government. The concept has been voiced in the White House no less than in neighborhood taverns.

"Government is not the solution to our problem, government is the problem," Ronald Reagan said, even as he assumed the highest office in the land.

Now let's be clear about those who have been protesting the nation's lockdown. Not all are motivated by ideology, which more often fills seminar rooms than picket lines.

KIMBERLY P. MITCHELL/DETROIT FREE PRESS

Protesters, wearing semiautomatic rifles, rally against Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's order to stay home during the COVID-19 pandemic at the Michigan state capital in Lansing, Mich. on Thursday, May 14, 2020.

Many protesters are patently hurt by paychecks lost when movie theaters and malls were compelled to close. The pandemic's impact has been felt differently by blue-collar and white-collar Americans.

Those who earn a living by peering into a computer have generally been able to take their job home. Sitting in my living room and writing this piece, I'm still on a payroll.

That opportunity hasn't been available to beauticians, barbers and bartenders. Even in restaurants open for takeout orders, cooks, hosts and servers have had their hours reduced.

Television nightly reveals the pained faces of proprietors closing the doors of small businesses invested with decades of sweat equity. They had followed a hallowed script: Work hard, save your money and build something of your own. Don't depend on others, least of all some bureaucrat.

I might carry a picket sign, too, if my share of the American dream had been shot down by a governor ordering my cash register closed when I have mortgage payments to make.

If I did so, some of the marchers I'd be among wouldn't be economically motivated. The anti-lockdown protests have been supported by anti-vaxers, opponents of required vaccination of children. Others are officeholders and candidates seeking to benefit from President Ronald Reagan's anti-government slogan.

That such diverse types could gather under the same banner shows how profoundly the American character has been shaped by the ideal of being left alone, each of us free to chart our destiny.

It was a desire nourished by geography. America's Western frontier seemed a refuge for restless types itching to live beyond the reach of sheriffs and legislatures. The reality wasn't so simple, but the myth was magnified by Hollywood. In the

See AMERICANS on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Helping others maintain mental health

By JOHN DLG DEMAPAN JR.
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

We all know someone in this small tight-knit community facing and dealing with a life-threatening medical condition such as cancer, heart disease, or any number of others. While researchers and scientists are still finding ways to cure cancer, heart disease, and many other medical conditions, we as community members can help to maintain people's mental health through some simple, positive tips as follows:

1. Maintain social life with friends. For people dealing with life-threatening medical conditions, now more than ever, your friends are really needed to help you through this process in this stage of your life. A simple coffee get-together or hanging out and chatting is a great way to maintain regular routine in socializing with your personal circle of friends;

2.Stay in contact. A simple text, call or email can go a long way in making them feel that they still matter in one's life. Although this might not seem like a big deal, the fact that they know you are still in their thoughts definitely means the world to them;

3. Reach out to help. While they battle their life-threatening medical conditions head on, you can help lessen or ease their anxiety or stress by offering assistance such as driving them to their weekly medical appointments, doing some of their house chores, and all other situations that they may need help with.

4.Remember, it's the same person. Although facing an uphill battle with their medical conditions, they are still the same person before the diagnosis, so don't change your perception about them. No pity parties. Converse with them as you normally would; don't change anything. They would automatically feel the different vibe coming from you.

In being mindful of and adhering to these four simple tips, you are doing your part in maintaining your family and friends' mental health positively and possibly changing their perspective in life in general that they are not alone in battling their life-threatening medical conditions and, most importantly, that they have people who care.

John DLG Demapan Jr. is president of the Northern Marianas Protection and Advocacy Systems Inc. board.

We rise or fall together—and we are determined to rise

By GEORGE W. BUSH
THE CATALYST, VIA INSIDESOURCES.COM

This is a solemn and challenging time in the life of our nation and world. A remorseless, invisible enemy threatens the elderly and vulnerable among us—and some of the healthiest, too. It challenges our sense of safety, security and community. Our children are separated from their teachers and their friends in a way that is hard for them to understand. Many have lost loved ones, jobs and businesses while confronting fear and loneliness.

We were not meant to live apart from each other, especially in times of challenge. Our tools of compassion—a hug, gathering as people of faith or in friendship, caring for our family when they are ill—bring the opposite of the love we intend.

Rarely in history have we served our neighbor by distancing from them.

As Americans, this concept is frustrating and foreign to us. We live in a free nation, but independence from the state doesn't mean isolation from each other. Our free society thrives when neighbors help neighbors and the strong protect the weak. The success of a nation to uphold that freedom depends on the character of its citizens.

Our freedom and way of life have been tested before. Following 9/11, I saw a great nation rise as one to honor the brave, to grieve with the grieving and to embrace unavoidable new duties. This spirit of service and sacrifice is alive and well in America.

Officials at every level are setting out the requirements of public health that protect us all. Extraordinary medical professionals continue to risk their own health for the health of others and search for treatments that will heal the sick and save lives. Each day, reminded that the suffering we experience as a nation does not fall evenly, ordinary Americans have committed extraordinary acts of kindness and compassion.

I'm particularly proud of the work of the Presidential Leadership Scholars, graduates of a leadership training program between my presidential center and those of my father, President Bill Clinton and President Lyndon Johnson. The good work of these men and women are just a few examples of how Americans have met new challenges with creativity and innovation.

Some are working to ensure that those who are food insecure do not go hungry. Michael Hole is the founding adviser of Good Apple, a doctor-prescribed grocery delivery service fighting hunger. Before the pandemic, they had about 50 active subscribers—mostly children in need. Now, they have over 600. Good Apple has launched a new "Stay Home, Stay Healthy" initiative in partnership with the city of Austin, Texas, and they are delivering about 250,000 pounds of food to 8,000 people with underlying medical conditions in central Texas so they can stay safe at home.

Others are working together to make medicine more efficient and effective during this pandemic. Amy Fiedler, along with 14 other fellow Presidential Leadership Scholars, created a free tool to help hospitals and communities rapidly assess their preparedness for COVID-19. The resource has been shared with 700 health care facilities and organizations caring for 9 million patients nationwide through GetWellNetwork.

And many are working with the most vulnerable among us. Kevin Adler, founder and CEO of Miracle Messages, an organization that reconnects people experiencing homelessness with their loved ones, has joined forces with the national grassroots movement #TheHomelessFront. Kevin and his colleagues continue to demonstrate compassion toward the homeless during this crisis by coordinating supplies, combatting isolation and reuniting families.

Empathy and simple kindness are essential, powerful tools of national recovery. Even at an appropriate social distance, we can find ways to be present in the lives of others—to ease their anxiety and share their burdens. Our differences are small in the face of this shared threat. In the final analysis, we are equally vulnerable and equally wonderful in the sight of God. I maintain an unshakeable faith in the future of country, because I know the character of our citizens. We rise or fall together. And we are determined to rise.

George W. Bush was 43rd president of the United States. This article first appeared in The Catalyst: A Journal of Ideas from the Bush Institute. *It is being distributed by InsideSources.com.*

T.O.A.S.T. Trilogy: Telling Old Age Sonnet Tales

LITERARY NOOK

By JOEY 'PEPE BATBON' CONNOLLY
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Joey "Pepe Batbon" Connolly is a retired teacher and has been named a poet laureate of Tinian. He has taught English in CNMI public schools for the past 30 years. He has also taught in Alaska, New Orleans, and Las Vegas.

My Dreams Get Toasted

My dreams have all been toasted
a bevy of beauties all buttered up
buddies have pranked and roasted
me for days, I feel like a lost pup
my dogs are tired socks all stink
shoelaces broken sweat in my eyes
pollen allergies make it hard to blink
mosquitoes draw blood on my thighs
hot humid bummer summer for sure
t shirt sticks to me I'm sopping wet
oh for some well water cold and pure
actually I'll take any drink I can get
some of my toasted dreams are French
now to get rid of that underarm stench.

Cotton Candy at Cupid County Fair

Scent of fried chicken and waffles under my nose
café au lait and beignet, hot corndogs came next
our love was hornier and thornier than a wild rose
as it quickly soared and soured we tried our best
me a prince of fools you quite sober and straight
a growing young chick still close to mother's nest
so we went arm and arm to the fair on our last date
when we came back I turned left you turned right
no one could have ever predicted our future or fate
we had no plans for heaven or hell for day or night
as we swam into ecstasy in that hot summers air
the sexual peaks we reached gave us both a fright
Cupid only knows what arrows he shot and where
we ate pink cotton candy at the Cupid County fair.

Not Donne Yet No Woman is a Peninsula

Chicken coops aren't pig pens no woman is a peninsula
sailing around John Donne's 'No Man Is An Island'
made my older brother Peter smile and keep smiling
if you were very fat and floating around on sea water
might you at least be considered a very small island
not every dog has its day nor every cat live nine lives
too much smoke and mirrors bees can't find their hives
you probably could roller skate in a buffalo herd
if you were an 18 wheeler or a big Kenworth diesel
but could you ever paint like Vermeer or Paul Cezanne
with all their colors on your pallet and a large size easel
turkeys will run through the straw and fields of corn
you can't catch chicken pox from a skunk or weasel
but you can eat canned peaches as sure as your born.

AMERICANS

From Page 10

movies, pioneers and cowboys picked up and moved when cramped by newcomers.

That plot line wouldn't fill theater seats in ancient Athens. Shortly before the philosopher Socrates was executed, his disciples bribed the jailer. But Socrates vetoed their plan for him to escape to a district akin to our Wild West. To an urbane Greek, hiding in a wilderness wasn't a life worth living.

In this country, the federal government tacitly accepted its citizens' preference for it to keep its distance. Except during national emergencies—the Civil War and World War I—its functions were minimal. Running the postal system and collecting tariffs at port cities were pretty much it.

Then came successive super emergencies, the Great Depression and World War II. The government perforce became a goliath, and has remained so under Republican as well as Democratic control.

For the GOP that's meant constant promises to dismantle big government, none fulfilled. For Democrats it's meant tackling problems such as civil rights for racial and other minorities and affordable medical care for all, while fending off accusations that its reforms pave the way to a dictatorship.

That brings us to a present dilemma. Some say Big Brother's lockdown brought them to the point of being unable to feed their families. Others fear relaxing the regulations puts them in mortal danger, yet both groups are united in one respect.

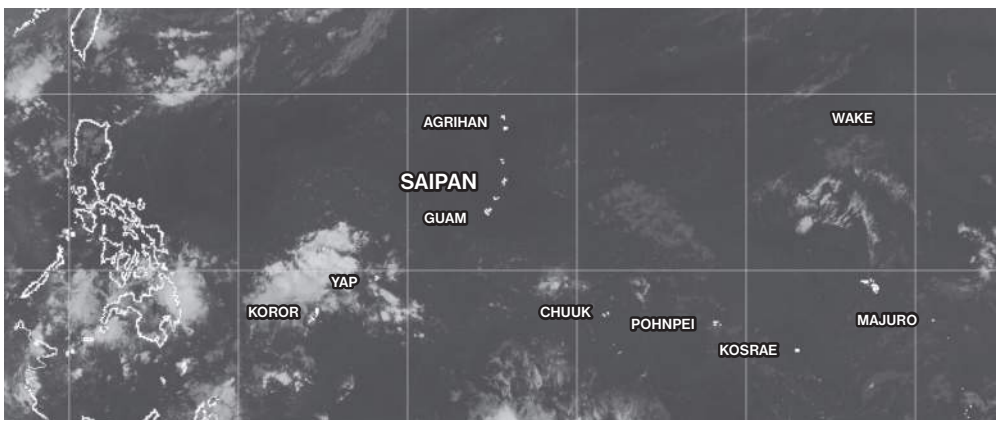
All of our fates are in the hands of a presidential administration for which small government is gospel—even as it is confronted by a deadly disease with economic consequences the enormity of which beggars the imagination.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
Partly cloudy becoming mostly cloudy for guam and rota in the afternoon.	Mostly cloudy for guam and rota, partly cloudy for Saipan and Tinian.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
89° 78°	89° 78°	89° 79°	89° 79°	89° 79°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 7:01 AM, THURSDAY, MAY 28, 2020

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Dry conditions with only a few low-level clouds are seen across the Marianas. A band of showers is seen SE of Guam along 11N in an area of trade-wind convergence. An upper-level low is seen SSW of Wake Island. Buoys and altimetry data show seas between 3 and 4 feet.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

FLIGHT SCHEDULE

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				**GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN**			
UA117	9:15am	9:55am	1, 4, 6	UA174	7:30am	8:11am	1, 4, 6

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

MICRONESIA	▲ ▼ °F	
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	86° / 78°
Palau	Thunderstorms	87° / 80°
Yap	Thunderstorms	87° / 79°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	87° / 80°
Pohnpei	Partly Cloudy	86° /80°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	87° / 80°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	85° / 80°

AROUND THE GLOBE	▲ ▼ °F	
Auckland	Showers	55° / 48°
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	91° / 63°
Hong Kong	Thunderstorms	86° / 81°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	88° / 75°
London	Cloudy	73° / 54°
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	73° / 58°
Manila	Thunderstorms	95° / 81°
Melbourne	Mostly Cloudy	57° / 48°
Miami	Sunny	85° / 78°
New York	Sunny	78° / 60°
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	81° / 64°
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	79° / 57°
Busan	Partly Cloudy	73° / 61°
Rome	Mostly Sunny	73° / 61°
Salem	Mostly Cloudy	91° / 67°
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	61° / 51°
Seoul	Sunny	79° / 55°
Tokyo	Mostly Cloudy	79° / 64°
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	81° / 66°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	5:45 AM	6:43 PM
Saturday	5:45 AM	6:43 PM
Sunday	5:45 AM	6:43 PM
Monday	5:45 AM	6:44 PM
Tuesday	5:45 AM	6:44 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	11:21 AM	-	-
Saturday	-	12:24 AM	12:19 PM
Sunday	-	1:09 AM	1:16 PM
Monday	-	1:54 AM	2:13 PM
Tuesday	-	2:37 AM	3:11 PM

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY	FEET	
1:29 AM	HIGH TIDE	2.04
7:14 AM	LOW TIDE	1.43
11:17 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.75
6:48 PM	LOW TIDE	0.08

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

GOVERNMENT RESOURCE LISTING PAGE 1 MAY 21, 2020, 11:30 AM

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
- ***Cashier & Customer Service***
  Monday - Friday (Closed on Holidays)
  7:30 AM - 3:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-4282
  Pay bills online at www.cucgov.org, via phone by calling toll free Tel: 1-(855)-729-2282, or at any Bank of Guam, Bank of Saipan, or Bank of Hawaii Branch

CNMI State Medicaid Agency
- ***Eligibility Office & Accounting / Claims***
  Monday - Friday
  7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-4880/4882
  Still accepting applications and supporting documents via drop-box at Medicaid Office. Medicaid application & renewal / redetermination forms must be original. Applications/forms available for pick up next to the drop-box or online at: www.medicaid.cnmi.mp

Department of Land and Natural Resources
- ***Division of Land Registration***
  Monday - Thursday
  8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 322-9987
- ***Division of Agriculture***
  Monday - Thursday
  8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 256-3320 / 3321
- ***Division of Fish & Wildlife***
  Monday - Thursday
  8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-6000

Office of the Attorney General
- ***Civil & Criminal Divisions***
  Monday - Friday
  8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 237-7500 / 7600

Department of Public Works
- ***Administrative Services Division***
  Monday - Thursday
  8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 235-9570 / 5818
- ***Building Safety Code Division***
  Monday - Thursday
  8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 234-2726 / 2296
- ***Technical Services Division***
  Monday - Thursday
  8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 234-9828 / 9838
  - ***Highway Branch***
    Monday - Friday
    7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
- ***Energy Division***
  Monday - Friday
  7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-4480 / 4481
- ***Roads and Grounds Division***
  Monday - Friday
  7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 322-9498
- ***Solid Waste Management Division***
  - ***Lower Base Transfer Station & Marpi Landfill***
    Open all week except Wednesday & Sunday
    7:30 AM - 1:00 PM
    Tel: (670) 322-2745 (Lower Base)
    (670) 322-2761 (Marpi Landfill)

CNMI Public Assistance Office
- ***Available via phone or email only:***
  Mondays - Fridays
  7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-2411
  Email: info@pa.gov.mp

Office of the Public Defender
- Monday - Friday
  9:00 AM - 3:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 234-6503

SOCIAL DISTANCING TO BE IMPLEMENTED AT ALL OFFICES

GOVERNOR'S COVID-19 TASK FORCE HOTLINE TEL: (670) 287-0046

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COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

GOVERNMENT RESOURCE LISTING PAGE 2 MAY 21, 2020, 11:30 AM

Department of Finance
- ***Division of Revenue & Taxation***
  Monday - Friday
  8:00 AM - 4:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-1000
- ***ALL OTHER DIVISIONS (Except Customs)***
  Monday - Thursday
  8:00 AM - 4:00 PM
- ***Division of Customs Services***
  - ***Airport:*** OPEN DAILY
    8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
  - ***Seaport:*** Monday - Friday
    8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
  - ***Chalan Kanoa Post Office:***
    Monday - Friday 7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
    Saturday 7:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Department of Public Lands
- ***Cashier accepting payments:***
  Monday - Friday, 8:30 AM - 3:30 PM
- ***Available via phone or email:***
  Monday - Friday, 7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 234-3751/52/53/54
  For appointments call (670) 234-3751 or email dpl@dpl.gov.mp

Saipan Zoning Office
- ***Available via phone ONLY:***
  Monday - Thursday
  7:30 AM - 11:30 AM
  Tel: (670) 234-9661/ 9662/ 9663
  Email: geri.delacruz@zoning.gov.mp

CNMI 2020 Census
- Monday – Friday
  7:30 AM – 4:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 682-2020
  Email: cnmi@2020census.gov

Department of Public Safety
- ***Bureau of Motor Vehicle (BMV)***
  - ***Document Drop-Off For Vehicle / Watercraft Registration Renewal***
    Monday - Thursday
    8:00 AM - 11:00 AM
    Tel: (670) 664-9068
  - ***Walk-In For Drivers License***
    Monday - Thursday
    8:00 AM - 11:00 AM
    Tel: (670) 664-9066
- ***Firearms and Records***
  Monday - Thursday
  9:00 AM - 3:00 PM (For Walk-Ins)
  Tel: (670) 664-9072
- ***Highway Safety Office***
  Monday - Thursday (For Walk-Ins)
  9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-9121 / 9125 / 9131

Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services
- ***Fire Enforcement Office***
  Monday - Thursday
  7:30 AM - 4:00 PM
  Tel: (670) 664-9178

Commonwealth Bureau of Military Affairs
- Monday – Friday
  7:30 AM – 4:30 PM
  Tel: (670) 488-2200 / 0440 / 0550
  Email: glenna.reyes@gov.mp

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Business

BEA CABRERA

Java Joe's is located along Isa Drive in Dan Dan right across the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. main office.

JAVA JOE'S
still brewing after 15 years

BEA CABRERA

From left, Java Joe's owner Mahesh Thapa, manager Kathleen Tolentino, and barista Prativa Pandey.

BEA CABRERA

Popular ice blended drinks with pearls available every day from 7am to 6pm at Java Joe's.

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

Established in 2005, husband-and-wife team Mahesh Thapa and Manju Pandey armed with passion for coffee and excellent entrepreneurial spirit breathed new life to Java Joe's located in Dan Dan when they took over management in 2007. Now running for 15 years, Java Joe's doesn't look like its slowing down catering to a ready-to-drink market.

"My wife and I were born in Nepal… but we have been traveling around the world. I have 20 years of food and beverage experience from Australia and the U.S. mainland and Manju is very passionate about coffee and have always wanted to run a coffee shop," Thapa said.

"Currently, Java Joe's has 11 employees, our manager Kathleen Tolentino have been working here since the beginning in 2005 and she is still here…When we moved to Saipan many years ago, we felt that our background in food and beverage will play an important part," Thapa added.

Java Joe's serves delicious coffee from real espresso drinks (hot or cold) like vanilla latte, green tea latte, caramel latte, caramel macchiato, mocha, mocha bianca, almond roca mocha, black forest mocha, and favored mocha. They also service cappuccino, cafe latte, cafe au lait, cafe breve, cafe crème, espresso shot, and espresso americano. Other drinks include Java Joe's chocolate, cremosa, chai tea, and bubble tea.

"Aside from our coffee, our blended cold drinks are also popular—milkshake, pearl shakes, fruit smoothies, mochaccino, java jelly etc… we have a good menu starting with our daily breakfast special which consists of different kind of omelet, pancakes, French toast, and meals with rice partnered with either bacon, sausage, ham, spam longanissa, beef tapa, and tocino," Thapa said.

"We also have burgers, soba, grilled ham and cheese sandwiches, tuna sandwich with fries. There are so many food choices to choose from… we always leave room for growth and modify our menu according to what customers like," Thapa added.

Currently, Java Joe's is operating on limited time due to the COVID-19 pandemic. "We had a meeting with family members and employees on what we can do to sustain the business rather than closing down… we believe that we can take better care of our customers if we take good care of our employees during this time and we knew someone has to bring home the bread and butter…so we never closed," Thapa said.

Thapa continued that their willingness, their passion to go the extra mile is what kept Java Joe's going. "There is no substitute for hard work… we always think positive, life has its ups, but the more struggle you have, the more stronger you will be… The community loves coming here because we are not selling what we like but what they like….We are not a big company but we enjoy what we do and always move one step ahead."

Java Joe's is open from Monday to Sunday, 7am-6pm for take-out only. For more information, call (670) 235-5098 or visit their FaceBook page: Java Joe's.

DOCOMO PACIFIC joins with AT&T to support FirstNet Deployment in region

TAMUNING, Guam—In 2019, DOCOMO PACIFIC was selected by AT&T to help support the deployment of FirstNet-America's public safety communications platform—in both Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

FirstNet delivers a single, nationwide network platform that's purpose-built to enhance communications across the entire public safety community. FirstNet is available to all first responders—career and volunteer, urban, rural or tribal. And it's bringing public safety communications into the 21st century with new, innovative capabilities, helping first responders connect to the critical information they need—every day and in every emergency. FirstNet is built with AT&T in a public-private partnership with the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet Authority)—an independent agency within the federal government.

Based on the collaboration with AT&T, DOCOMO PACIFIC will provide access to its existing LTE network coverage and capacity while helping to build out additional LTE coverage with the Band 14 spectrum. DOCOMO PACIFIC is an authorized member of AT&T's FirstNet Dealer Program, which means it can sell FirstNet services to eligible first responders.

To learn more about FirstNet, go to www.FirstNet.com.

FirstNet and the FirstNet logo are registered trademarks of the First Responder Network Authority. All other marks are the property of their respective owners.

DOCOMO PACIFIC is a wholly owned subsidiary of NTT DOCOMO, Japan's leading mobile operator. Headquartered in Tamuning, Guam, DOCOMO PACIFIC is the largest provider of personal, residential, enterprise connectivity and entertainment services in Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands. Named Guam's most reliable network with the fastest speeds and best coverage by GWS in 2019, we are also the 4-time winner of Pika's Best of Guam, 4-time winner of Best of The Pacific. DOCOMO PACIFIC is dedicated to bringing you and your family closer to the things that matter most. Get to know more about what makes us "Better Together" at www.docomopacific.com. ***(PR)***

Fed report notes businesses less optimistic about economy

WASHINGTON (AP)—Businesses across the country surveyed by the Federal Reserve don't appear to share the Trump administration's optimism about a rapid economic recovery starting this summer.

The Federal Reserve released a report Wednesday that draws on business contacts from the central bank's 12 regions and details the economic damage in April and May, as measures to combat the spread of the coronavirus outbreak took hold.

The report, know as the beige book, cited business contacts who were less sanguine about the economy's outlook than the administration. President Donald Trump has forecast "some great numbers" in the final three months of the year and a strong recovery in 2021.

"Although many contacts expressed hope that overall activity would pick up as businesses reopened, the outlook remained highly uncertain and most contacts were pessimistic about the potential pace of recovery," the Fed said.

Even with the assistance from the Fed and nearly $3 trillion in support from Congress, the economy has absorbed a major blow, with unemployment jumping to 14.7% in April, the highest since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

STOCK PORTFOLIO

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW	S&P	NASDAQ
25,548.27	3,036.13	9,412.36
+553.16	+44.36	+72.14
2.21%	1.48%	0.77%

EXCHANGE RATES

In U.S. dollar terms

Australian Dollar	1.5101	Hong Kong Dollar	7.7523	Russian Ruble	69.8013
British Pound	0.8146	Indian Rupee	75.2396	Singapore Dollar	1.4196
Canadian Dollar	1.3754	Japanese Yen	107.8470	South Korean Won	1213.09
Chinese Yuan	7.0458	Malaysian Ringgit	4.3121	Swiss Franc	0.9683
Euro	0.9075	New Zealand Dollar	1.6124	Taiwan Dollar	29.4717
		Philippine Peso	49.6773	Thailand Baht	31.8520

Nation

Mayor: Officer who put knee on man's neck should be charged

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—The mayor of Minneapolis called Wednesday for criminal charges against the white police officer seen on video kneeling against the neck of a handcuffed black man who complained that he could not breathe and died in police custody.

Based on the video, Mayor Jacob Frey said officer Derek Chauvin should be charged in the death of George Floyd. The footage recorded by a bystander shows Chauvin with his knee on Floyd's neck as Floyd gasps for breath on the ground with his face against the pavement. The officer does not move for at least eight minutes, even after Floyd stops speaking and moving.

"I've wrestled with, more than anything else over the last 36 hours, one fundamental question: Why is the man who killed George Floyd not in jail?" said Frey, who is white.

He later added: "I saw no threat. I saw nothing that would signal that this kind of force was necessary."

The day after Floyd died, Chauvin and three other officers were fired—an act that did not stem the flood of anger that followed the widely seen video shot on Memorial Day outside a convenience store.

Protesters marched more than 2 miles Tuesday to the police precinct in that part of the city, with some damaging property and skirmishing with officers in riot gear who fired tear gas. Conflict erupted again Wednesday at the same precinct, with some protesters throwing rocks and bottles at police. News helicopter video appeared to show looting of nearby stores, including a Target, a Cub Foods and an auto parts store, with no evident police intervention.

Another demonstration unfolded on the street outside Chauvin's suburban home. An officer told protesters that Chauvin was not there. Red cans of paint were earlier spilled on his driveway, and someone wrote "murderer" in chalk at the end of his driveway. No one answered when an Associated Press reporter knocked on the door.

Many activists, citizens and celebrities called for criminal charges before Frey did. But Floyd's family and the community may have to wait months, if not years, before investigations are complete.

Floyd family attorney Benjamin Crump, a prominent civil rights lawyer, called for peaceful protests.

"We cannot sink to the level of our oppressors, and we must not endanger others during this pandemic," Crump said in a statement. "We will demand and ultimately force lasting change by shining a light on treatment that is horrific and unacceptable and by winning justice."

Police Chief Medaria Arradondo, who rose to the top job after his predecessor was forced out following the 2017 shooting of an unarmed white woman by a black Minneapolis officer, urged protesters to "be respectful." He said he was working to change the department's culture.

In this Monday, May 25, 2020, frame from video provided by Darnella Frazier, a Minneapolis officer kneels on the neck of a handcuffed man who was pleading that he could not breathe in Minneapolis. AP

"One incident can significantly bring people to doubt that," he said.

The chief defended the department's use of tear gas to break up Tuesday night's protests, saying officers used it only after some people broke into a secure area that gave them access to squad cars and weapons.

Gov. Tim Walz and Minnesota's two top law enforcement officials—Attorney General Keith Ellison and Public Safety Commissioner John Harrington, both black—promised a thorough, transparent investigation. But Walz and Ellison didn't endorse the mayor's call to immediately charge the officer, saying the legal process needs to play out.

"I understand the emotions are running high, and I think it's important for the mayor to channel the emotion of the people who he represents. But I think it is critical that we adhere very closely to the facts and the law and the normal process," Ellison said.

The Hennepin County Attorney's Office, which would prosecute any state charges, issued a statement saying that Floyd's death had "outraged us and people across the country" and that the case "deserves the best we can give."

The FBI was investigating whether officers willfully deprived Floyd of his civil rights.

Floyd's death and that of Ahmaud Arbery in Georgia have reopened the divide between minority communities and police that grew to a national uproar following the 2014 killings of Eric Garner and Michael Brown, the 2015 killing of Freddie Gray and others.

Speaking to reporters at Cape Canaveral, Florida, President Donald Trump called the death in Minneapolis "a very, very sad event" and said his administration was going to "look at it." Later, he tweeted that he had asked for the federal investigation be expedited.

Trump continues to claim broad powers he doesn't have

WASHINGTON (AP)—Threatening to shut down Twitter for flagging false content. Claiming he can "override" governors who dare to keep churches closed to congregants. Asserting the "absolute authority" to force states to reopen, even when local leaders say it's too soon.

As he battles the coronavirus pandemic, President Donald Trump has been claiming extraordinarily sweeping powers that legal scholars say the president simply doesn't have. And he has repeatedly refusing to spell out the legal basis for those powers.

"It's not that the president does't have a remarkable amount of power to respond to a public health crisis. It's that these are not the powers he has," said Stephen Vladeck, a University of Texas School of Law professor who specializes in constitutional and national security law.

First it was Trump's assertion that he could force governors to reopen their economies before they felt ready. "When somebody's the president of the United States, the authority is total," he claimed.

Trump soon dropped the threat, saying he would instead leave such decisions to the states. But he has revived the idea in recent days as he has tried to pressure governors to allow churches and other places of worship to hold in-person services, even where stay-at-home orders and other limits on large gatherings remain in effect.

Asked Tuesday what authority he had to enforce such a mandate, Trump was cagey.

"I can absolutely do it if I want to," he said. "We have many different ways where I can override them and if I have to, I'll do that."

The White House declined to spell out any specific statute, but White House spokesman Judd Deere said in a statement that "every decision the president has made throughout this pandemic has been to protect the health and safety of the American people."

"Getting the nation back to work, back to sporting events, back to churches, back to restaurants, and doing so safely and responsibly is the president's shared goal with governors and the private sector, but the cure cannot be worse than the disease," Deere said.

Trump "certainly does not have the power under any reasonable reading of the Constitution or federalism to order places of worship to open," said Matthew Dallek, a historian at George Washington University's Graduate School of Political Management who specializes in the use of presidential power.

But Dallek said that just because Trump doesn't have the authority to do most of the things he's threatened, doesn't mean he won't, for instance, try to sign executive orders taking such action anyway — even if they are later struck down by the courts.

"What has limited Trump previously? Not very much. So I think he will do whatever seems to be in his best interest at any particular moment," Dallek said.

Trump, he said, also could try to abuse his powers to leverage other instruments of government, from the Department of Justice to the IRS, to push for investigations or launch regulatory crackdowns to punish states, cities or companies. Trump also has showed he's willing to exercise powers that modern presidents have largely avoided, including his recent purging of inspectors general.

When the president declared the pandemic a national emergency back in March, he activated more than 100 different statutory authorities. Yet Trump, said Vladeck, has failed to exercise many of them.

FBI: Florida man scouted terror targets and attack weapons

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP)—A Florida man is charged with providing material support to the Islamic State extremist group, including attempting to buy multiple weapons and scouting potential targets for an attack in the Tampa Bay area, federal prosecutors said Wednesday.

A criminal complaint charges Muhammed Momtaz Al-Azhari, a 23-year-old U.S. citizen, with attempting to provide material support or resources to a designated foreign terrorist organization. The charge carries a potential 20-year prison term.

A public defender listed in court records for Al-Azhari said the government's charges in the case unfairly attempt to portray him as a terrorist.

"The allegations misunderstand both the law and the evidence," said the public defender, Samuel Landes, in an emailed statement. "I'm thankful that in this country everyone enjoys a presumption of innocence, and I look forward to Mr. Al-Azhari's day in court before a jury of his peers."

An FBI affidavit says Al-Azhari was recorded as expressing admiration for Omar Mateen, the deceased shooter at the Orlando Pulse nightclub massacre in 2016, and even drove there to scope out the location. In a conversation with a confidential informant, the FBI says, Al-Azhari said "that's how I want to die, to be honest."

The informant then asked how many people Al-Azhari wanted to kill.

"I don't want to take four or five, no. I want to take at least 50," Al-Azhari replied on the recording, according to the affidavit. "You know like, brother Omar Mateen in Orlando did. He took 49 with him."

The affidavit also details how Al-Azhari negotiated with an undercover FBI employee to purchase a variety of guns and silencers, including an AK-47-style rifle. He was arrested Sunday after taking possession of weapons allegedly to be used in an attack.

"We are grateful for the hard work and swift action by our law enforcement partners and concerned citizens during this investigation," said U.S. Attorney Maria Chapa Lopez, whose district includes Tampa. "Their coordination and cooperation in this matter allowed us to interrupt a serious threat, without harm to anyone."

Asia

S. Korea virus cases make biggest jump in 50 days

BANGKOK (AP)—South Korea on Thursday reported its biggest jump in coronavirus cases in more than 50 days, a huge setback that could erase some of its hard-won gains. Health officials warned that the resurgence is getting harder to track and social distancing and other steps need to be taken.

The Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said 67 of the 79 new cases reported were from the Seoul metropolitan area, where about half of South Korea's 51 million people live.

Health Minister Park Neung-hoo during a virus meeting pleaded for all residents in the greater capital area to avoid unnecessary gatherings and urged companies to keep sick employees off work.

At least 69 infections so far have been linked to workers at a massive warehouse operated by local e-commerce giant Coupang. Health authorities say the company likely didn't enforce preventive measures such as masks at the facility in Bucheon, near Seoul, and may have had employees working while they were sick.

AP

Passengers wearing face masks line up to board their planes at the domestic flight terminal of Gimpo airport in Seoul, South Korea, Wednesday, May 27, 2020.

Hundreds of other infections have been linked to nightclubs and other entertainment venues, which saw huge crowds in early May after officials relaxed social distancing guidelines.

It remains to be seen whether the recent spike in infections force back a phased reopening of schools, which had been a major accomplishment in the nation's anti-virus campaign. The Education Ministry on Wednesday said class openings were delayed at 561 schools nationwide because of virus concerns.

KCDC director Jeong Eun-kyeong has said the country may need to reimpose social distancing restrictions after easing them in April, saying it's becoming increasingly difficult for health workers to track transmissions amid increasing public activity.

"The number of people or locations we have to trace are increasing geometrically," she said during a briefing Wednesday afternoon. "We will do our best to trace contacts and implement preventive measures, but there's a limit to such efforts. There's a need to maximize social distancing in areas where the virus is circulating, to force people to avoid public facilities and other crowded spaces."

Officials are preparing for a possible surge of infections in the greater capital area, mapping out plans to share hospital capacities between Seoul and nearby cities and ensure swift transports of patients so that a spike of cases in one area doesn't overwhelm its hospital system.

Meanwhile, South Korea's central bank lowered its policy rate to an all-time low of 0.5% to soften the pandemic's shock to the country's trade-dependent economy. The Bank of Korea also adjusted its annual growth outlook from a 2.1% expansion to a 0.2% contraction. The country's economy hasn't seen an annual contraction since 1998. The nation's economy shrank 1.4% during the first three months of the year as people stayed home and exports shrank amid worldwide lockdowns.

South Korea was reporting around 500 new cases per day in early March before managing to stabilize its outbreak with aggressive tracking and testing, which allowed officials to relax social distancing guidelines.

But Seoul and nearby cities restored some of the controls in recent weeks by shutting thousands of bars, karaoke rooms and other entertainment venues to slow the spread of the virus.

AP EXPLAINS: Why China is pushing HK security law

BEIJING (AP)—China is taking matters into its own hands after last year's tumultuous anti-government protests in Hong Kong that often descended into tear gas-filled clashes.

In a surprise move, the central government announced last week that it would develop laws to outlaw secession, subversion, terrorism and foreign interference in Hong Kong. The National People's Congress is expected to ratify the bill Thursday, and legislation could be finalized this summer.

China's decision raises questions about the future of the semi-autonomous territory. Will China station its feared state security officers in the city? Does it signal an erosion or the end of the "one-country, two-systems" framework that gives Hong Kong a high degree of local autonomy?

The devil is in the details. And they haven't come out yet.

"There are still a lot of important questions we have, which have not been answered," said Joseph Cheng, a political scientist and veteran of Hong Kong's pro-democracy movement.

BEIJING'S BOMBSHELL

The proposal the Congress is set to approve is really a guideline for future steps. It tasks the legislature's Standing Committee, a smaller body with decision-making authority, with developing specific laws at future meetings.

Two items in the seven-article draft are getting particular attention. One is the possible deployment of state security. The other is the bypassing of Hong Kong's legislature by crafting and approving the laws in Beijing.

The Hong Kong government is required to enact national security legislation under Article 23 of the Basic Law, its constitution, but has been unable or unwilling to do so because of opposition. An attempt in 2003 was abandoned in the face of huge protests.

China dropped its bombshell the day before the opening of the annual National People's Congress last week. In the wake of last year's protests, the most violent since China took back the former British colony in 1997, it said it was stepping in.

Technically, the central government can do this, but it doesn't look good. Article 18 of the Basic Law says that the congressional Standing Committee can add laws on defense, foreign affairs and other matters outside Hong Kong's autonomy. National security falls into that.

For Cheng and others in the pro-democracy camp, the move is the latest in a series of steps that mean the end of "one-country, two systems." But, he said, "We have to admit that this is legal."

CONCERN OVER ARRESTS

After the initial announcement, the biggest shock came in Article 4 of the proposal, which reads in part: "When needed, relevant national security organs of the Central People's Government will set up agencies in (Hong Kong) to fulfill relevant duties to safeguard national security."

Speculation swirled. Would Chinese police be able to arrest people in Hong Kong? Would arrested protesters be questioned by both local and national police?

"This may be worrisome. It depends on what the bill says about what powers these people have," said Albert Chen, a constitutional law scholar at Hong Kong University and member of a committee that advises the congressional Standing Committee on the Basic Law.

India, China in tense standoff at Himalayan frontier

SRINAGAR, India (AP)—Indian and Chinese soldiers are in a bitter standoff in the remote and picturesque Ladakh region, with the two countries amassing soldiers and machinery near the tense frontier, Indian officials said.

The standoff began in early May when large contingents of Chinese soldiers entered deep inside Indian-controlled territory at three places in Ladakh, erecting tents and posts, the officials said this week.

They said the soldiers ignored repeated verbal warnings, triggering a yelling match, stone-throwing and even fist fights in at least one place along Pangong Lake, the site of several such confrontations in the past.

The five officials, including two military, two police and one civilian administrator, spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the matter.

Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said Wednesday that the situation on the China-India border was "generally stable and controllable."

The sides were communicating through both their front-line military units and their respective embassies to "properly resolve relevant issues through dialogue and consultation," Zhao said at a news conference in Beijing.

China is committed to abiding by agreements signed by the sides and to "maintaining peace and stability in the border area between China and India," Zhao said.

The Chinese and Indian soldiers also faced off along a frontier in India's northeastern Sikkim state in early May.

Indian media quoted Gen. Manoj Mukund Naravane, the country's military chief, as saying the incidents in Ladakh and Sikkim had led to injuries caused by "aggressive behavior on both sides."

President Donald Trump said the U.S. was willing to act as a mediator between the two Asian giants.

"We have informed both India and China that the United States is ready, willing and able to mediate or arbitrate their now raging border dispute," Trump tweeted Wednesday.

Though skirmishes aren't new, the standoff has escalated in recent weeks at Ladakh's Galwan Valley, where thousands of soldiers from the two countries have camped just a few hundred meters from each other, the Indian officials said.

India is building a strategic road through the Galway Valley connecting the region to an airstrip.

The China-India border dispute covers nearly 3,500 kilometers (2,175 miles) of frontier that the two countries call the Line of Actual Control. The countries fought a bitter war in 1962 that spilled into Ladakh.

The most serious dispute is over China's claims that India's northeastern state of Arunachal Pradesh is part of Tibet, which India rejects.

World

UN: Virus could push 14M into hunger in Latin America

BOGOTA, Colombia (AP)—The U.N. World Food Program is warning that upward of at least 14 million people could go hungry in Latin America as the coronavirus pandemic rages on, shuttering people in their homes, drying up work and crippling the economy.

New projections released late Wednesday estimate a startling increase: Whereas 3.4 million experienced severe food insecurity in 2019, that number could more than quadruple this year in one of the world's most vulnerable regions.

"We are entering a very complicated stage," said Miguel Barreto, the WFP's regional director for Latin America and the Caribbean. "It is what we are calling a hunger pandemic."

A family peers from the window of their home as they wait to receive boxes of free food, during a lockdown to curb the spread of the new coronavirus, in Bogota, Colombia, Monday, May 4, 2020. AP

Signs of mounting hunger are already being felt around the region, where desperate citizens are violating quarantines to go out in search of money and food and hanging red and white flags from their homes in a cry for aid. Many of the hungry are informal workers who make up a sizable portion of Latin America's workforce, while others are newly poor who have lost jobs amidst an historic economic downturn.

"I am the captain of the family," said Dieufete Lebien, 57, a now unemployed construction worker in Haiti. "A boat that is sinking."

The number of people going hungry is likely to be higher than the U.N. projection, which only takes into account numbers in the 11 countries where the organization operates. The estimate does not include, for example, Venezuela, where one in every three people faced hunger last year, according to the food agency's 2019 study.

The escalating hunger comes as the COVID-19 pandemic increasingly ravages Latin America. Brazil now ranks second globally in the number of coronavirus infections, behind the U.S., and rising levels in Peru, Chile, Mexico and elsewhere are stretching hospitals thin, increasingly in poor urban and remote rural communities.

U.N. food agency executive director David Beasley warned in April that an addition 130 million people could be "pushed to the brink of starvation" worldwide by the end of 2020. The new estimates for Latin America indicate the region will be especially hard hit.

In Haiti, hunger could more than double, from 700,000 to 1.6 million. Hundreds of thousands of Venezuelan migrants living in the Andes as well as those in Central American countries reeling from a severe drought are also expected to see levels multiply.

The impact of such a sharp rise in hunger could have far-reaching implications ranging from higher levels of chronic childhood malnutrition to security issues. The WFP is calling on nations to expand their social safety net to those who traditionally don't qualify for aid. Many governments and international organizations have been stepping up, providing cash transfers and food deliveries, but are facing logistical and economic hurdles.

Local activists like Cristian Perea in Cali, Colombia, said government efforts are reaching only a fraction of those who need assistance. He recently went out delivering boxes of fruit, rice, vegetables and sugar to families who have gotten nothing and came across one 9-year-old boy who had only consumed a glass of water in the last day.

"You could tell he was in need," Perea said.

Latin America and the Caribbean are expected to see a 5.3% economic contraction this year, possibly a sharper drop than during the Great Depression. That downturn comes after seven years of low growth averaging less than 0.5%.

"We could enter another lost decade," said Alicia Bárcena, chief of the U.N.'s regional economic branch, referring to a previous downturn during the 1980s that took Latin America 25 years in order to recover 1979 per-capita income levels.

Latin America's economies are in a bind, not able to borrow as freely as their European counterparts, making painful budget cuts, slashing jobs, shuttering embassies and putting state employees on part-time working schedules.

"Latin American governments hardly have the resources to finance their current levels of spending," said Sergio Guzmán, director of Colombia Risk Analysis.

Alimenta la Solidaridad, a charity that operates 214 soup kitchens across Venezuela, has seen demand increase since a nationwide quarantine went into effect in mid-March. The group usually serves 14,500 meals to children daily; now an additional 5,300 boys and girls are on a waiting list hoping to get food, but supplies are limited.

"The situation pains me greatly," said Roberto Patiño, the organization's director.

Across the region, nearly 30 million more people are expected to find themselves in "situations of poverty" and another 16 million among the extreme poor, the U.N. estimates.

Red Cross says 208 COVID-related attacks on health workers

UNITED NATIONS (AP)—The president of the International Committee of the Red Cross said it has recorded 208 COVID-19-related attacks against health workers and installations in 13 countries since March, a striking contrast to the cheers and clapping in gratitude for their work in many nations.

Peter Maurer said Wednesday that health workers are being attacked and abused and health systems are being targeted at a time when they are most needed.

"The COVID-19 crisis is fast threatening to become a protection crisis," he told the U.N. Security Council. Maurer told reporters the ICRC compiled data from 13 countries in the Middle East, Asia-Pacific, the Americas and Africa where it operates, and it's "likely the actual numbers are much higher than what we calculated."

He said the incidents range from verbal threats to burning down facilities reportedly housing COVID-19 patients.

Maurer said 23% of incidents included physical assaults, 20% were discriminatory-related attacks on health workers, and the rest included the deliberate failure to provide or deny assistance, verbal assaults and threats, and a disregard for health personnel protective measures.

Maurer said he was struck by the discrepancy with the outpouring of support for health personnel, "while in reality what we see is that it remains an extremely delicate and sensitive issue within which attacks, ... violence, the whole panoply of adverse attitudes are visible or detectable, which demand our response."

The ICRC and a dozen other global organizations representing millions of doctors, nurses and health care professionals issued a declaration Wednesday calling the recent displays of public support for COVID-19 responders "heartwarming." But they said "unfortunately, the sad reality is that health workers have for a long time been subject to many shocking forms of violence."

The organizations pointed to harassment, stigmatization, physical violence and the killing of some health care professionals and the people they were caring for, as well as the 208 incidents reported by the ICRC since the beginning of the pandemic.

"We urge governments, communities and weapon bearers to respect and protect health care at all times, and to contribute to creating a protective environment in which health care can be provided safely," the groups including the International Council of Nurses, the International Hospital Federation, and Physicians for Human Rights said.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres also spoke at the council meeting on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, saying that as the pandemic "rages on, causing enormous human suffering and additional stress to health systems," people already weakened by years of fighting "are particularly vulnerable."

He lamented that support for his March 23 call for a global cease-fire to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic has not been translated into "concrete action."

Stranded Colombians plead for COVID-19 airlift out of Brazil

SAO PAULO (AP)—Surrounded by boxes, a pile of rice packages and mattresses, José Ávila Saavedra sat on the floor with a thousand-yard stare Wednesday. For two weeks he has lived inside Sao Paulo's international airport, his life one interminable layover.

Saavedra and more than 200 other Colombians are camping out in the airport in hopes that their plight will prod Colombian authorities in Brazil to charter a humanitarian flight home. Anything to get them back to Colombia, and far from Latin America's coronavirus hot spot.

"We don't have money or anything to do in Brazil. We want to ask Colombia's president to please help us. We're only eating thanks to donations," Saavedra said.

Saavedra had sold clothes in Sao Paulo, earning enough to support his wife, nephew and 2-year-old daughter. Then, Sao Paulo state officials ordered a halt to nonessential commerce as part of a lockdown to control the spread of the virus, and he lost his means to obtain and sell merchandise.

Most of the stranded Colombians lay asleep near the airport's check-in area Wednesday, a few of them on mattresses and others atop cloth sheets or flattened cardboard boxes. Some stretched out on the bare floor.

Those who were awake said they don't have the more than $400 for a flight to Colombia, after having lost their jobs due to the pandemic. Retail jobs and restaurant work disappeared, they said.

Off The Wall

Doughnuts lure bear into trap

FORT MYERS, Fla. (AP)—Glazed or jelly? A black bear roaming around a Florida city proved no match for the doughnuts that lured the animal into a humane trap.

The Fort Myers News-Press reports that the juvenile 250-pound (113- kilogram) bear spent a good chunk of Tuesday morning meandering around the Gulf coast city. Wildlife officials say bears tend to move more in the spring in search of mates and, as always, food.

In such a congested area, tranquilizing the bear wasn't an option, said Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Officer Adam Brown. He said the drugs don't always work immediately on large animals such as bears.

"When we use a tranquilizer the bear sometimes will run away, and we didn't want to take any chance of it running into traffic or the residential area," he said.

So instead, officers turned to doughnuts from Krispy Kreme and some blueberry pie-scented spray in a trap. That did the trick.

Brown said the bear was relocated to a state-managed wildlife area. Authorities estimate there are about 4,000 black bears in Florida.

Wildlife officials say people should be sure to secure their garbage cans and should not put them out the night before pickup because it gives bears more opportunity to get into them.

Drug lord pleads poverty to escape arrest

MEXICO CITY (AP)—Drug lord Rafael Caro Quintero, a notorious underworld figure who is on the FBI's most wanted list for the murder of a federal agent over three decades ago, said in a legal appeal that he has no money, is too old to work and has no pension.

The odd plea was filed Tuesday by Caro Quintero's lawyer seeking an injunction against his arrest or extradition to the United States for the kidnapping and murder of DEA Special Agent Enrique Camarena in Mexico in 1985.

The court papers state: "The plaintiff argues insolvency, because he says he is more than 60 years old, is neither retired nor has a pension, and given the fact that he is a fugitive from the law, cannot work or perform any activity to earn money."

The U.S. government says Caro Quintero and his family remain in the drug trade.

FBI TEN MOST WANTED FUGITIVE
VIOLENT CRIMES IN AID OF RACKETEERING; CONSPIRACY TO COMMIT VIOLENT CRIMES IN AID OF RACKETEERING; CONSPIRACY TO KIDNAP A FEDERAL AGENT; KIDNAPPING OF A FEDERAL AGENT; FELONY MURDER OF A FEDERAL AGENT; AIDING AND ABETTING; ACCESSORY AFTER THE FACT
RAFAEL CARO-QUINTERO
Photograph taken in 2016
Photograph taken in 1985
In this image released by the FBI shows the wanted posted for Rafael Caro Quintero. AP

After spending years in prison in Mexico, Caro Quintero was freed in 2013, a decision that angered Washington.

A Mexican federal court has issued a warrant for his rearrest, but he remains at large.

Car wash worker finds stimulus check in trash

GREENVILLE, N.C. (AP)—A car wash worker in North Carolina found treasure amid the business's trash when he discovered a $1,200 IRS stimulus check mixed in with the garbage.

Antonio Hernandez was taking out the trash at the Greenville car wash when he spotted the payment in the can, WITN-TV quoted his daughter, Michelle Alvarado, as saying.

Hernandez and Alvarado were able to track down recipient Charles Thompson, who said he was not even expecting to get a check after recently moving to a new address.

"I was behind on rent, I work construction so I work by the day, and I just try to keep going and going as best I can," Thompson told the news station. "That money helped put me ahead and put me on the right track a little bit, to get back on my feet."

Hernandez and Alvarado added that they were happy to help connect Thompson with the lost funds, even though they and Thompson had no idea how the check ended up at the car wash in the first place.

"It was very important for him to receive that check, especially in these uncertain times," Alvarado said.

The IRS has been sending the economic impact payments to millions of Americans around the country as part of a rescue package aimed at combating the economic effects of shutdowns amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Boy, 6, cracks open robbery case by reeling in sunken safe

JOHNS ISLAND, S.C. (AP)—A 6-year-old boy helped crack open a nearly decade-old robbery case when he reeled in a locked safe from the bottom of a South Carolina lake.

Knox Brewer of Johns Island took up "magnet fishing" and began hunting for metal objects underwater as a way to pass time during the coronavirus pandemic, his family members told WCIV-TV this week.

The boy was out with his family at Whitney Lake this month when the magnet attached to his line stuck to something heavy in the mud below, the news outlet reported. With the help of a bystander, Knox pulled in and pried open what turned out to be a waterlogged lockbox containing debris-covered jewelry and credit cards, as well as a checkbook, according to a video of the discovery.

"I knew the right thing to do was go ahead and call the local authorities, get them involved and try to solve this mystery," the child's father, Jonathan Brewer, told the outlet.

Authorities determined the sunken safe belonged to a woman who lived across the street from the lake. She said it had been stolen from her home eight years ago, the outlet reported.

While most of the expensive items had been taken, the find still turned out to be a valuable catch, according to the Brewers. They said they were able to reunite her with charms from an old bracelet.

"The first thing that she did was just kneel down, hug Knox and thanked him and thanked him for bringing that closure to her," Jonathan Brewer said.

Science & Technology

Instagram takes on YouTube to help its stars make money

By SARAH FRIER
BLOOMBERG NEWS

Instagram will let creators profit directly from their videos, helping popular users generate more revenue during the COVID-19 crisis, while moving into more direct competition with YouTube.

Starting next week, Instagram will show ads before clips that run on its IGTV service for longer-form videos. The company plans to share 55% of the revenue with creators, the same portion that YouTube gives its stars.

The company will also start testing a way for users to sell digital badges in their live videos. If viewers buy a badge, their names will stand out among fans' comments, designating them as supporters. The video host will receive all the money directly for the first few months of the test, until Instagram starts taking a share of the revenue later this year or in 2021, Instagram said.

Twitter adds fact-check warnings to Trump tweets

For the first time, Twitter has flagged some of President Donald Trump's tweets with a fact-check warning.

On Tuesday, Twitter added a warning phrase to two Trump tweets that called mail-in ballots "fraudulent" and predicted that "mail boxes will be robbed," among other things. Under the tweets, there is now a link reading "Get the facts about mail-in ballots" that guides users to a Twitter "moments" page with fact checks and news stories about Trump's unsubstantiated claims.

Until now, the president has simply blown past Twitter's half-hearted attempts to enforce rules intended to promote civility and "healthy" conversation on its most prominent user. Trump frequently amplifies misinformation, spreads abuse and uses his pulpit to personally attack private citizens and public figures alike—all forbidden under Twitter's official rules. ***(AP)***

How being online renews Office 365 PC apps

TECH Q&A

By STEVE ALEXANDER
Star Tribune (Minneapolis)

Steve Alexander covers technology for the Minneapolis Star Tribune. *Readers may write to him at Tech Q&A, 425 Portland Ave. S., Minneapolis, Minn. 55488-0002; email: steve.j.alexander@gmail.com. Please include a full name, city and phone number.*

Q: In your column about Microsoft Office 365 (see tinyurl.com/ydyhsap2), you said the user "must go online at least once every 30 days or your PC-based software will stop working." What do you mean by go online? Just connect to the internet? Use the Microsoft Edge browser? Update my Office 365 software?

A: As you read in the earlier column, an Office 365 subscriber can download the Office apps to a PC and work offline for 30 days. After that time, Microsoft requires you to go online so it can confirm that you are still a paid subscriber.

By "go online," I mean connect to the internet with any web browser and visit any website. When you do, the Office 365 apps on your PC should automatically contact Microsoft via their built-in "activation and validation service." Microsoft will then look up your account to see if you're still a subscriber. If you are, your apps will be renewed for another 30 days of offline work.

However, sometimes just connecting to the internet isn't enough to trigger this app rejuvenation. If that happens, you will eventually get the warning message "product deactivated," and you won't be able to edit or create documents. The solution is to give the activation and validation service a nudge by logging in to Office 365.

You can log in via one of the PC-based apps, such as Word. Open Word, then open one of the Word files on your PC. At the top of the screen, click "File," and in the resulting menu click "Account." On the next screen, log in with the e-mail address and password you use for Office 365. That should prompt the activation and validation service to work, and for Microsoft to renew the apps for another 30 days of offline work.

Q: My Windows 10 Asus laptop has begun disconnecting from our Wi-Fi network as often as every 5 minutes, forcing me to restart the PC to reconnect. The PC seems to be OK; it easily connects to the internet if I use a cable instead of Wi-Fi. Our Wi-Fi network also seems to be OK; it works for a Chromebook, two phones and two TVs. What's wrong?

A: There are two possible culprits—your PC's software or its connection to the Wi-Fi network.

Because your loss of Wi-Fi connectivity is intermittent, I suspect the latter. The PC-to-wireless connection is probably being interrupted because the Wi-Fi signal is too weak.

A weak Wi-Fi signal can be caused by too much distance between the wireless router and the PC, or by obstacles in your house (such as walls or brick fireplaces) that attenuate the signal as it passes through them. Once the signal is weakened, it's easily interrupted by radio interference, which can be caused by microwave ovens, Bluetooth devices, fluorescent lights or a neighbor's Wi-Fi network. To strengthen the signal, move your laptop closer to the wireless router.

If that doesn't work, use the Asus troubleshooting checklist for Wi-Fi problems (see tinyurl.com/y9r9wups). It deals with updating your BIOS (basic input-output system) software, running Windows updates and replacing the wireless software driver for your PC's network adapter (the circuitry that connects the PC to any network.)

Life & Style

US couple waits 2 1/2 months in lockdown to visit Pompeii

AP
Colleen and Marvin Hewson, from the United States, pose for a photograph during their visit to the archeological sites of Pompeii, near Naples, southern Italy, Tuesday, May 26, 2020.

By COLLEEN BARRY and ALESSANDRA TARANTINO
ASSOCIATED PRESS

POMPEII, Italy (AP)—An American couple waited a lifetime plus 2 ½ months to visit the ancient ruins of Pompeii together.

Colleen and Marvin Hewson, retirees from Michigan, were first in line when the archaeological site reopened to the public Tuesday following Italy's coronavirus lockdown. Their long-delayed visit capped an unlikely adventure that had stranded them in modern Pompeii, a small tourist town, since early March.

"We have been patiently waiting since then for the ruins to open," Colleen Hewson said as the couple got the chance to stroll through the ruins of the Roman city destroyed in A.D. 79 by a volcanic eruption, trailed by journalists capturing another milestone in Italy's reopening.

"Here we are, we finally made it inside. It only took 2 ½ months," Marvin Hewson added.

For the Hewsons, seeing Pompei was meant to be the highlight of a trip celebrating his 75th birthday and their 30th wedding anniversary. Marvin Hewson, a history buff, had visited once while serving in the U.S. Navy in the 1960s and always vowed to get back; the trip was his wife's gift to him.

The couple from Clinton Township, Michigan, which is near Detroit, arrived in Rome on March 5 for the vacation of a lifetime, her first time overseas. By the time they made it to the gates of Pompeii several days later, the popular tourist site was closed and Italy was under lockdown due to the coronavirus epidemic that broke out more than 700 kilometers (500 miles) to the north.

Attempts to book flights out failed, and they resigned themselves to life under lockdown. Back in the United States, their four adult children relaxed when they realized their parents were far from the epicenter of Italy's virus outbreak and in good local hands.

"We made a great connection with our Airbnb host family," Colleen, 63, said. The host, Fabio Sposato, translated news for her and her husband, and helped keep them busy, tasking them with picking oranges and lemons from trees near the condominium where they stayed and teaching them to make limoncello.

"It helped to pass the time," Marvin said.

Under lockdown, they fell into a routine, walking more than 7,000 steps a day, often to a grocery store near the archaeological site that allowed time to sit on a bench and gaze upon the ruins, "wishing we could be inside," Colleen Hewson said. In all those weeks, "our Italian never got better," she quipped, and they would use charades to communicate things they were looking for in the grocery store.

Too much TV? Enter HBO Max, the latest streaming wannabe

By TALI ARBEL
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Is a pandemic the perfect time to launch a new and relatively expensive streaming service? AT&T sure hopes so.

The phone company is investing billions in HBO Max, its first big entertainment venture since it spent $85 billion for Time Warner in 2018. The good news for its timing: millions are stuck at home, watching more video than ever. The bad news: many of them also out of work and carefully watching their incomes. The service launches Wednesday in the U.S.

"People are going to look at the price point first," said Steve Nason, research director at Parks Associates. HBO Max costs $15, same as the HBO Now streaming service it's supposed to replace, with discounts after the launch limited to some AT&T customers as well as a one-week free trial. Other new streaming services such as Disney Plus and Quibi launched with cheaper prices and bigger discounts.

Entertainment companies like AT&T's WarnerMedia are broadly shifting to streaming video, following in Netflix' wake, as more people drop their traditional cable bundles. Disney launched Disney Plus and the sports-focused ESPN Plus and took control of Hulu from an industry joint venture. Comcast's NBCUniversal is launching Peacock widely this summer. ViacomCBS is redoing CBS All Access, pumping it up with more programming.

Even Fox Corp. has its Fox Nation app. Apple, a tech company, started a small service of its own. A short-video service targeted to cellphones, Quibi, also hopes to get in on the streaming pie; it hasn't had much success yet.

HBO Max comes stacked with goodies, like browsing a particularly pleasing Blockbuster store—classic quality-TV series from HBO like "The Sopranos," "The Wire" and "Sex and the City;" comfort-food network TV in "Friends" and "The Big Bang Theory;" Superman and Batman movies from DC. The Warner Bros. film library stretches back decades to Hollywood's golden age. There's even a reboot of Looney Tunes.

"Maybe timing is actually good," said Wells Fargo analyst Jennifer Fritzsche. "There might be a Netflix exhaustion factor." Netflix has predicted extremely strong subscriber gains for this quarter.

'The Vast of Night' is a cunning lo-fi sci-fi noir

By JAKE COYLE
ASSOCIATED PRESS

"The Vast of Night," a micro-budget noir set in 1950s New Mexico, crackles with B-movie electricity.

The film is one of those little miracles: a directorial debut, made for nothing, that establishes a young filmmaker of self-evident command. With atmosphere and cunning, director Andrew Patterson steers "The Vast of Night" through the soft, shadowy night air of a small and quaint borderland town where unseen mysteries lurk.

The set-up may sound vaguely familiar, and it is. "The Vast of Night" is framed as an episode of "Paradox Theater," a "Twilight Zone" knockoff that opens by warning the TV viewer: "You are entering the realm between the clandestine and the forgotten."

But "The Vast of Night" is more than the pastiche it pretends to be, and it shows plenty of B-movie moves of its own. That made "The Vast of Night" a festival hit last year after it premiered at the Slamdance Film Festival. Amazon subsequently picked it up and will begin streaming the film Friday. "The Vast of Night" has also already been playing at a handful of drive-ins, where its period setting and old-fashioned sci-fi intrigue make it very possibly the most drive-in-ready movie of the pandemic.

It also works just fine at home. The film takes place during the first high school basketball game of the season in Cayuga, New Mexico. The game has drawn most of the town's 492 population to the gym, where the camera trails Everett (Jake Horowitz), a fast-talking student and radio DJ who already looks and sounds ready to join Edward R. Murrow at CBS.

He's showing Fay (Sierra McCormick), a 16-year-old switchboard operator with a new audio recorder, some of the basics of reporting as they circle the gym and the already-bustling parking lot. They're both bright, ambitious teenagers in dark-framed glasses. Fay excitedly recounts the future predictions of a magazine article that forecast "vacuum-tube transportation" and telephone numbers assigned at birth. While strolling on a quiet, dark lane beneath leafy trees and talking of a semi-true future, they seem momentarily out of time.

Lawsuit: Ultra refuses refunds for canceled music festival

MIAMI (AP)—Two men are suing organizers of Ultra Music Festival, claiming they were denied refunds after the three-day electronic dance music festival in Miami was canceled in March because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Samuel Hernandez, of Miami, and Richard Montoure, of Washington state, filed the lawsuit Tuesday in Miami federal court. They are also seeking class-action status to obtain full refunds, with interest, for thousands of ticketholders from around the world.

Ultra had been scheduled for the weekend of March 20 at Bayfront Park in downtown Miami, but strict social distancing guidelines imposed by state and local governments earlier that month to combat the spread of the coronavirus banned all large gatherings, including festivals and concerts. Among the acts scheduled to perform at the South Florida event were David Guetta, The Chainsmokers, Afrojack, Cash Cash, Martin Garrix and Galantis, according to the Ultra website.

Following negotiations with the city of Miami, Ultra organizers announced that they were postponing the festival until March 2021, the lawsuit said. Rather than offering refunds for the 2020 festival, organizers offered to honor the tickets for the 2021 or 2022 events, even though the events haven't been confirmed.

The lawsuit claims that Ultra is keeping the money rather than offering refunds and that is unjust and inequitable. Although the company's terms and conditions state it reserves the right not to offer refunds if the event is postponed, the lawsuit claims the terms are unenforceable and should be voided.

Ultra organizers didn't immediately respond to a message seeking comment.

NASA chief 'all in' for Tom Cruise to film on space station

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP)—NASA is rolling out the International Space Station's red carpet for Tom Cruise to make a movie in orbit.

The space agency's administrator, Jim Bridenstine, said before Wednesday's planned launch of two NASA astronauts aboard a SpaceX rocket that Elon Musk's company is already getting customers eager to blast off.

Cruise is one of them.

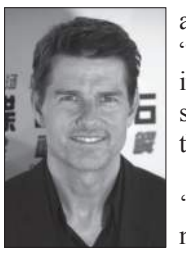
Bridenstine said he'll leaving it to Cruise and SpaceX to provide the mission details.

"I will tell you this: NASA has been in talks with Tom Cruise and, of course, his team, and we will do everything we can to make it a successful mission, including opening up the International Space Station," he told The Associated Press.

Asked about Cruise filming on the space station, Musk told "CBS This Morning," "Actually, I think that remains to be seen. We are supportive and I think NASA is supportive of anything that captures the imagination of the public."

Bridenstine said the whole reason NASA created commercial marketplace" is so SpaceX, Boeing and other private companies can attract customers besides the U.S. government. That will drive down costs to American taxpayers, he said, and increase access to space for all types of people—celebrities included.

"this



Cruise

"I don't admit this very often ... but I was inspired to become a Navy pilot because when I was in elementary school, I watched the movie 'Top Gun,'" the 44-year-old Bridenstine said.

Cruise starred as Navy pilot Pete "Maverick" Mitchell in the 1986 film. A sequel is due out later this year.

"The question is, 'Can Tom Cruise make a new movie that inspires the next generation Elon Musk.' And if he can do that, then we're all for it. NASA is all in," Bridenstine said.

A message to Cruise's representative was not immediately returned.

Disney, SeaWorld announce plans for Florida parks to reopen

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP)—SeaWorld and Walt Disney World will reopen in Orlando, Florida, in June and July after months of inactivity because of the coronavirus pandemic, under plans approved Wednesday by a city task force.

The proposals will now be sent to Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis for final approval.

The plan calls for SeaWorld to open to the public on June 11. Disney plans a tiered reopening, with Magic Kingdom and Animal Kingdom opening on July 11, followed by Epcot and Hollywood Studios on July 15. Last week, Universal Orlando presented its plan to reopen on June 5. That plan also has been approved by the Orlando task force, which sent its recommendation to the governor.

In this Jan. 9, 2019 photo, guests watch a show near a statue of Walt Disney and Micky Mouse in front of the Cinderella Castle at the Magic Kingdom at Walt Disney World in Lake Buena Vista, part of the Orlando area in Fla. Officials from SeaWorld and Disney World say they hope to open their theme parks in Orlando, Fla., in June and July. A city task force approved the plans on Wednesday, May 27, 2020. AP

"We are developing a series of 'know before you go' communication vehicles and our objective is to reinforce our health and safety messages to guests before they arrive on our property so they are aware and prepared for the new environment," Disney's senior vice president of operations, Jim McPhee told the task force.

He also said the parks would open with limited capacity, but he didn't specify the number of guests who would be allowed in initially. In a statement, the company said attendance will be managed through a new system that requires advance reservations for park entry.

Earlier this month most of Florida's counties entered a modified Phase 1, reopening restaurants and retail at limited capacity. South Florida, which has been hardest-hit by coronavirus cases, was added to Phase 1 earlier this week. DeSantis has said he's eager to get businesses reopened and is expected to approve plans to reopen the theme parks, which are major pieces of Florida's tourism industry.

Disney World also plans smaller, soft openings prior to July 11, but no specifics were provided.

Brandy Bocchino of Powdersville, South Carolina, had booked a trip to Disney several months ago for the week of July 11 for her daughter's dance competition. The competition was canceled but Bocchino held onto the date in hopes Disney would reopen.

"We were very excited to read of the July 11 opening," she wrote in an email to The Associated Press. "Must have had a little pixie dust flowing when we booked those dates!"

She said she feels comfortable going to Disney and being in crowds.

"I have worn either a surgical or N95 mask every day since the beginning of March this year due to the pandemic. Wearing a mask is just something that I am used to, so I will be happy to don one if it means I get to hop on the back of a mountain banshee and yell "Sivako," she said. "I really got the sense that they had listened to all of the experts and are trying to continue their business in the safest way possible."

NBC, producers say 'America's Got Talent' cleared by probe

LOS ANGELES (AP)—An investigation of Gabrielle Union's complaints of racism on the set of "America's Got Talent" concluded that her allegations were unfounded, according to NBC and the show's producers.

The outside review also said that Union's claims had "no bearing" on the show's decision to drop her as a judge, the network and production companies FremantleMedia and Syco said in a joint statement Wednesday. Syco is series host and producer Simon Cowell's joint venture with Sony Music.

Union

Union, known for her roles in the films "Bring It On" and "Bad Boys II," appeared on the talent showcase for a season, until she and fellow freshman judge Julianne Hough weren't asked to return.

The trade publication Variety reported that Union, who is black, believed she was fired because she had asked NBC and the show's producers to respond to an environment that tolerated racist jokes and remarks. That included what Union said were multiple notes from producers saying she was wearing her hair "too black" for the "America's Got Talent" audience.

NBC sought the investigation into Union's accusations.

"Through the investigation process, it has been revealed that no one associated with the show made any insensitive or derogatory remarks about Ms. Union's appearance, and that neither race nor gender was a contributing factor in the advancement or elimination of contestants at any time," NBC and the producers said.

A representative for Union didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

The findings, which were based on some 30 interviews, did highlight "some areas in which reporting processes could be improved," the companies said without offering details.

Teen in quarantine worries about staying close to beau

DEAR ABBY: I have been in a relationship with my boyfriend for a little over five months. We have enjoyed spending time with each other, but we never have deep, meaningful conversations, and I feel that it's negatively impacting our relationship.

Because of the coronavirus quarantine, we can't see each other because we are still in our teens and don't live together. If we don't start having conversations that mean something to either of us over the phone, I'm afraid we'll break up before we are allowed to see each other again. Please give me some advice.

— STUCK IN QUARANTINE

DEAR STUCK: You may be worrying needlessly. Stop for a moment and ask yourself what kind of conversations you had with your boyfriend BEFORE the pandemic. How deep were they?

Express how you have been feeling lately, but, if you can, try to keep your conversations upbeat. Share stories and videos with him that make you laugh. If he wants to discuss his concerns, be prepared to listen, but don't push him in that direction. Space your calls so there will be something fresh to talk about. And always end your chats by telling how much you care about him, which will probably make him smile.

DEAR ABBY: I have several adult nieces and nephews whose dysfunctional upbringing makes them react in a very hostile and aggressive manner to anyone they perceive as disagreeing with them. They verbally abuse anyone they view as opposing them. They have so alienated their parent's new spouse that they are no longer welcome in that parent's home at any time, for any reason.

I would like to remain on semi-friendly terms with them, but I am unwilling to accept their verbal abuse. Is there any way this can be fixed?

— DISTANCING IN OKLAHOMA

DEAR DISTANCING: Unless your nieces and nephews are willing to accept that they have anger management issues that need addressing, this isn't a problem that anyone other than a licensed professional can fix. If one of them unleashes a tirade on you, CALMLY point out that you prefer not to be abused and end the conversation by absenting yourself. Do it once, and I guarantee the word will spread.

DEAR ABBY: I'm at my wits' end. I love my husband, but when we have company, he dominates the conversation, usually repeating the same stories over and over. If friends and family tell him they've heard the story before, he just ignores the remark and continues.

He is retired, and I realize he doesn't socialize enough. His health has not been the best. By the end of the evening, I am worn out. What can I do?

— PAIN IN HOSTING

DEAR ABBY

By Abigail Van Buren
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

DEAR PAIN: That your husband is retired and isolated may contribute to his problem. As soon as it's feasible, encourage him to get out of the house and involve himself in some new activities where he can put his talents and experience to good use. However, if his repetitiveness is new behavior, this should be discussed with his doctor so he can be evaluated, because it could indicate the onset of a medical or neurological problem.

Good advice for everyone — teens to seniors — is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

HEY MOM, WANT TO SEE SOMETHING GREAT?
WITH ONE SIP FROM THIS ORDINARY CAN OF SODA, I CAN BURP FOR ALMOST TEN SECONDS STRAIGHT!
CALVIN, I DON'T...
BUT THAT'S NOT ALL! AT THE SAME TIME, I'LL ALSO RECITE A GROSS LIMERICK I LEARNED AT SCHOOL! ...READY?
MAYBE IF YOU RECITED THE GETTYSBURG ADDRESS...
FORGET IT. MY TALENTS ARE WASTED ON HER KIND.

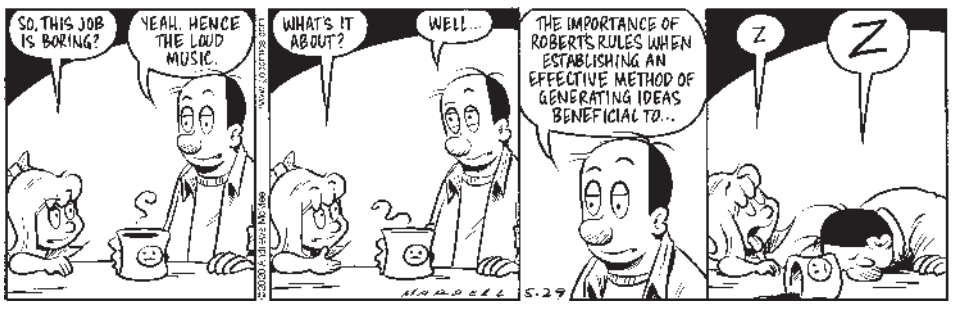
Garfield®

By Jim Davis

LIZ, I HAVE WRITTEN A POEM FOR YOU
"FIFTY POUNDS OF BACON"?
"YOU ARE THE AIR THAT I BREATHE"? THIS ISN'T MY SHOPPING LIST
JIM DAVIS 5-29

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


SO, THIS JOB IS BORING?
YEAH. HENCE THE LOUD MUSIC.
WHAT'S IT ABOUT?
WELL...
THE IMPORTANCE OF ROBERTS RULES WHEN ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE METHOD OF GENERATING IDEAS BENEFICIAL TO...
Z
Z

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Soup cooker
4 Little lie
7 Lost color
12 Log chopper
13 "I love," to Livy
14 Writer Jong
15 Can metal
16 Squarish cartoon sea dweller
18 Quirky
19 Ballerinas' skirts
20 Legendary loch
22 Workout venue
23 Always
27 Victory
29 Lynx
31 Mini-plateaus
34 Rich cake
35 Winter vehicle
37 Part of some German names
38 Tennis barriers
39 Clean air org.
41 "Amen!"
45 Blame
47 "— Sera, Sera"
48 "Buffalo Soldier" singer
52 Half of bi-
53 "Ugly Betty" actress Ana
54 NASCAR advertiser
55 The "I" of TGIF
56 Evaluate
57 Jargon suffix
58 Calif. clock setting

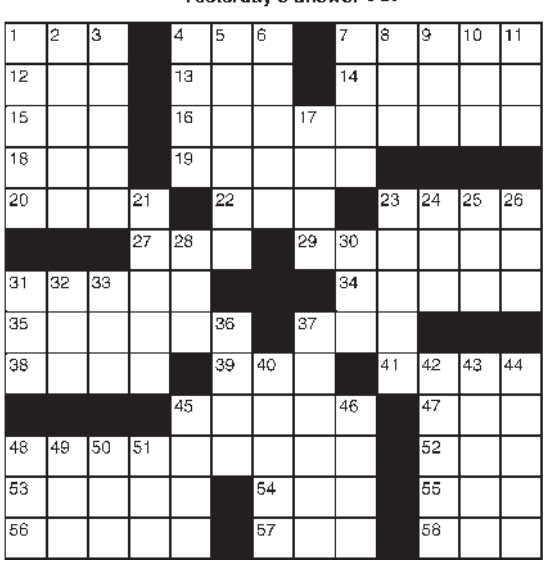
DOWN

1 "Cry, the Beloved Country" author Alan
2 Rust, for one
3 Looks after
4 Speedy
5 Cast doubt upon
6 Pirate's plunder
7 Dowels
8 Exist
9 Ad- — (improvise)
10 Author Umberto
11 Apply cream
17 Feeling no pain
21 Mops the deck
23 Durable wood
24 TiVo precursor
25 "Mangia!"
26 GPS suggestion
28 Equal (Pref.)
30 Oklahoma tribe
31 ISP choice
32 — out a living
33 Perch
36 Endure
37 Parking pros
40 Throb
42 Furnish with gear
43 Mom's sisters
44 Robbery
45 Disconcert
46 Ilk
48 Marsh
49 Mouths (Lat.)
50 A/C stat
51 "Top Gun" target

Solution time: 25 mins.

G	E	L	■	K	O	N	A	■	T	E	A	S
I	V	E	■	A	■	A	S	■	A	L	G	A
L	E	E	R	I	E	S	T	■	B	■	■	A	S
■	■	G	A	S	■	A	I	M	L	E	S	S
G	A	R	D	E	N	■	N	A	E	■	■	■
L	E	A	■	R	O	W	■	P	A	S	T	A
U	H	N	S	■	G	I	G	■	U	P	O	N
M	O	I	E	L	■	'	I	S	■	■	N	I
■	■	■	C	E	O	■	S	¯	A	K	E	S
A	M	E	R	I	C	A	■	O	W	E	■	■
B	■	T	E	■	E	N	R	O	L	L	E	E
E	R	A	T	■	A	N	A	G	■	E	L	K
L	O	I	S	■	N	O	M	E	■	E	F	G

Yesterday's answer 5-29



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Riley Keough, 31; Melanie Brown, 45; Rupert Everett, 61; Annette Bening, 62.

Happy Birthday: Uncertainty will be your downfall. Be resourceful, gather facts quickly and make decisions based on logic and facts. Knowing when to take action will make a difference to the way your year unfolds. Listen, verify and take action, and you will come out on top. Invest in yourself, not someone trying to sell you empty promises. Your numbers are 8, 14, 25, 29, 33, 42, 44.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Take a moment to go over details. If you take on too much, you will exhaust yourself physically or financially. A steady pace that allows you to replenish will lead to the gains and success you strive to achieve. ✪✪✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* You may desire change, but before you get started, consider what you can afford and the people who will be affected by the decisions you make. Sticking to the rules will be necessary and also limit what you can do. ✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Adjust your strategy. A change doesn't have to break the bank. You can adhere to a budget if you are willing to do the legwork to reach your objective. Update your skills to suit economic trends. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Get caught up. Take care of personal business, money matters and any health issues you have. Be reluctant to leave anything to chance or to rely on others to take care of your responsibilities. Move forward with a clear conscience. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-August 22):* A personal change will be advantageous. Think and do for yourself; you'll progress much faster. If you let someone interfere in your affairs or talk you into something you don't really want or need, you'll have regrets. Do your own thing. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* You'll be tempted to take a risk you shouldn't. Before you make a mistake, retrace your steps and rely on experience to help you ward off a potential problem. Stick to what you know and do best and the people you trust. 3 stars

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Reconnecting with someone will have some good and some adverse ramifications. An honest assessment of what transpired years ago will be necessary if you want to make a wise decision. Concentrate on physical and personal improvements, not what others are doing. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Be cautious regarding money, legal or health issues. Someone will offer the wrong information that can cost you. A problem at home is best resolved on your own. Outside influences will cause setbacks and disappointment. Do your own thing, and avoid regret. ✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Spend more time taking care of your responsibilities and less time arguing or dealing with complaints. Trust what you know to be factual and the people who have never let you down in the past. Finish what you start. ✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Look at your investments, consider your options and make changes that support better prospects as you move forward. Don't let your emotions motivate you to do something that deep down you know isn't right or best for you. ✪✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Spend time fixing up your surroundings or making alterations to the way you look. A new project that has the potential to bring in extra cash will give you hope and encouragement. Romance is on the rise. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(February 19-March 20):* Refuse to let insecurity take over. Believe in yourself and what you are capable of doing. Refuse to let someone's negativity bring you down. Distance yourself from those who take too much and give little in return. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are aggressive, proactive and flexible. You are innovative and compassionate.

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

1			9			1	4	
			4				8	
4				5			8	
3					7			
				4			3	
5			6					
							7	
								3
		9		2	4		5	

Difficulty Level ★★★★

5/29

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

1	3	9	7	4	5	8	6	2
7	5	2	8	9	6	3	1	4
8	6	4	2	1	3	5	9	7
9	4	3	5	8	7	6	2	1
6	7	5	9	2	1	4	3	8
2	8	1	6	3	4	9	7	5
4	1	7	3	5	9	2	8	6
5	9	8	1	6	2	7	4	3
3	2	6	4	7	8	1	5	9

Difficulty Level ★★★★

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

THE YEAR OF THE WHITE METAL RAT **Solution: 9 letters**

Y	M	R	E	L	Y	T	S	D	N	E	I	R	F	H
R	R	G	E	N	E	R	O	U	S	Ⓚ	Ⓛ	Ⓐ	Ⓣ	E
A	A	A	F	G	N	I	O	G	T	U	O	L	T	P
U	H	T	U	A	O	E	C	I	V	D	A	R	S	F
N	C	E	S	R	M	P	A	S	S	E	C	C	U	S
A	C	A	S	E	B	I	R	E	W	E	N	N	R	O
J	O	Y	R	E	V	E	L	C	R	I	C	H	T	C
N	M	H	G	I	N	N	F	Y	D	U	L	R	L	I
O	P	O	M	R	N	I	I	O	R	N	E	L	E	A
I	A	N	O	L	E	G	H	I	R	L	O	Y	A	L
T	N	E	D	I	F	N	O	C	I	T	H	B	D	O
C	Y	S	E	F	O	U	E	A	K	C	U	L	E	V
A	D	T	E	E	S	U	B	U	S	Y	M	N	R	I
R	E	E	R	A	C	L	U	N	A	R	O	C	E	N
E	L	U	F	R	E	E	H	C	P	A	R	T	Y	G

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Action, Advice, Bond, Busy, Career, Caring, Charm, Cheerful, Chinese, Clever, Company, Confident, Curious, Energy, Family, February, Fortune, Freedom, Friends, Fun, Generous, Honest, Humor, Invest, January, Leader, Life, Loving, Loyal, Luck, Lunar, Money, Newer, Outgoing, Party, Pass, Reliable, Rich, Social, Style, Success, Talk, Trust, Wealth, Will

Yesterday's Answer: Organized

Jo's Jewels Collector's Edition is back by popular demand. Purchase online at www.WonderWordBooks.com or call 1-800-642-6480.

Players want more games, no more salary cuts

NEW YORK (AP)—Baseball players appeared likely to propose more regular-season games this year while holding to their demand for full prorated salaries, people familiar with their deliberations told The Associated Press.

Washington pitcher Max Scherzer, among eight players on the union's executive subcommittee, issued a statement late Wednesday night calling management's proposal for more salary cuts a non-starter.

A day after Major League Baseball proposed a sliding scale of salary slashing for a pandemic-delayed season with an 82-game schedule in ballparks without fans, the union held a conference call Wednesday that included its executive board, player representatives and alternate player representatives, the people said. They spoke on condition of anonymity because no details were announced.

Scherzer, among the sport's highest-paid players, confirmed the call without divulging who was on it.

"After discussing the latest developments with the rest of the players there's no need to engage with MLB in any further compensation reductions," he said in a statement posted to Twitter. "We have previously negotiated a pay cut in the version of prorated salaries, and there's no justification to accept a 2nd pay cut based upon the current information the union has received."

"I'm glad to hear other players voicing the same viewpoint," he added, "and believe MLB's economic strategy would completely change if all documentation were to become public information."

It was unclear when the union will respond to MLB's plan, the people said.

Stars Mike Trout and Gerrit Cole would lose the most under MLB's plan, about 77% of the $36 million each they were set to be paid this season. In all, there are 133 players whose contracts call for salaries of $10 million or more, not including shares of signing bonuses.

A big leaguer earning $1 million or less would keep at least 43% of his salary under the six-tier scale. That includes a share of $200 million earmarked for players that is contingent on the postseason being completed. About 460 of approximately 900 players on rosters and injured lists when spring training was stopped in mid-March due to the new coronavirus make $1 million or less.

Trout and Cole would be cut to about $8 million each. Colorado's Nolan Arenado would drop from $35 million to $7.84 million.

"Interesting strategy of making the best most marketable players potentially look like the bad guys," Milwaukee pitcher Brett Anderson tweeted.

The players' association called the proposal "extremely disappointing." The union has argued players already accepted a cut to prorated shares of their salaries in a March 26 agreement and should not have to bargain again.

MLB would like to start the season around the Fourth of July in empty ballparks and proposed an 82-game regular season. It claims teams would lose billions of dollars by playing with no ticket money and gate-related revenue.

"This season is not looking promising," New York Mets pitcher Marcus Stroman tweeted. "Keeping the mind and body ready regardless."

Union head Tony Clark has not commented publicly on MLB's proposal and has said very little publicly since late March. Agent Scott Boras has repeatedly criticized MLB for proposing more salary reductions and has questioned the accuracy of management's financial claims.

"Hearing a LOT of rumors about a certain player agent meddling in MLBPA affairs," Cincinnati pitcher Trevor Bauer tweeted Wednesday. "If true—and at this point, these are only rumors—I have one thing to say... Scott Boras, rep your clients however you want to, but keep your damn personal agenda out of union business."

Boras did not respond to a request for comment on Bauer's remarks.

"Working together to manage the public health issue has brought great solidarity among the players," Boras said earlier in the day. "They are a strong united front and resolute in their support of the MLBPA."

A season with more than 82 games would lead to players earning a higher percentage of their original salaries. MLB says that without fans each additional game would result in a $640,000 loss.

Brewers chairman Mark Attanasio told the Greater Milwaukee Committee on Tuesday "the be-careful-what-you-wish-for part is hours every day."

"It's got to come together very quickly or we won't be able to, we will just run out of time," he said. "To pay players at a full contract rate, pretty much 90% of that would go to pay them and wouldn't cover any other costs."

Details of the plan have been disclosed to the AP by several people familiar with the proposal. They spoke on condition of anonymity because details had not been announced.

MLB's proposal says that within 48 hours of the ratification of an agreement for player compensation terms and health and safety protocols, the commissioner's office would announce a proposed timeline for the resumption of the season.

The resumption would include a training period of at least 21 days, and each team would be allowed a maximum of three exhibition games, all in the final seven days of the training period.

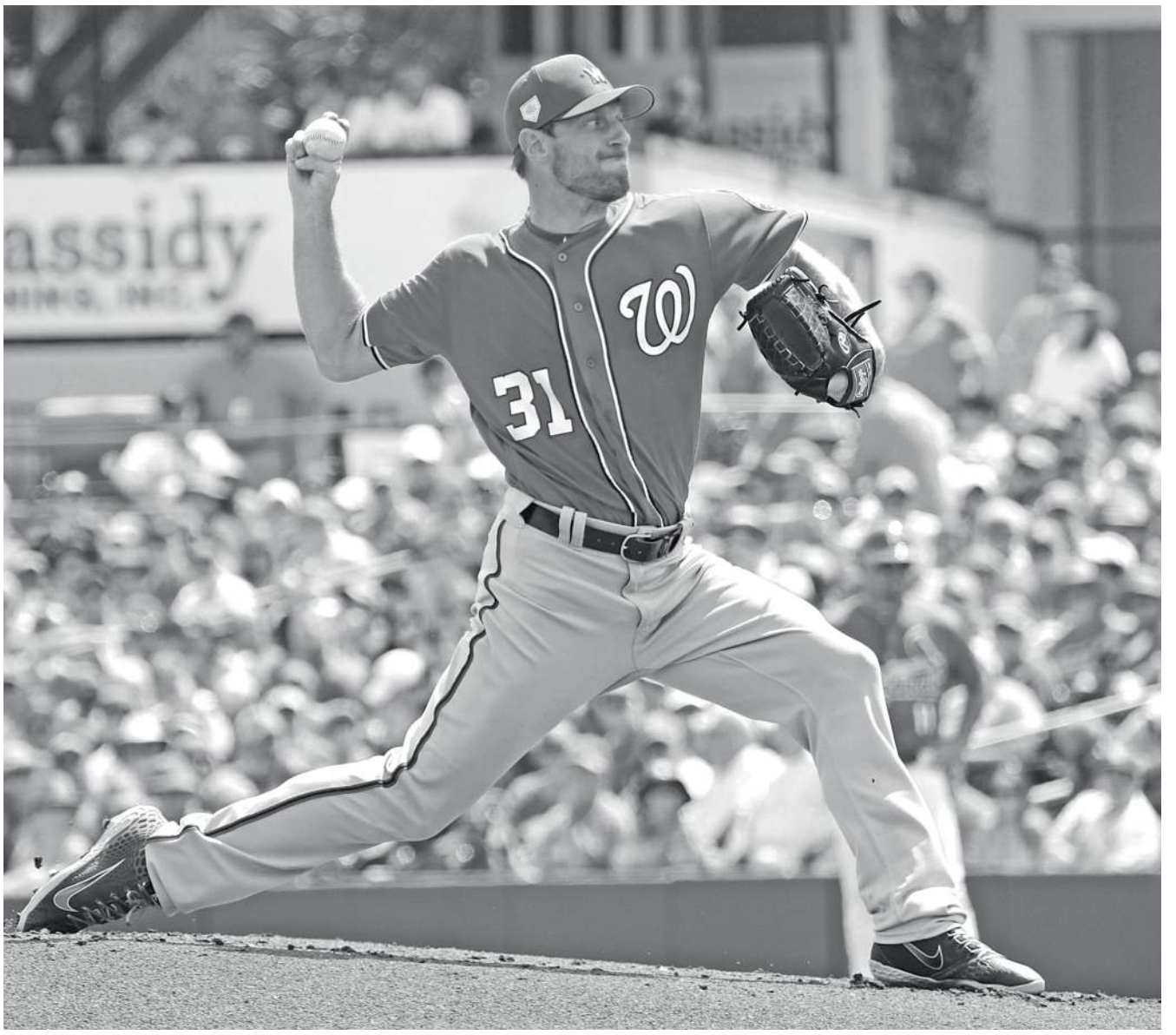
Opening day would be in early July, and the final scheduled regular-season game would be no later than Sept. 27—the same as in the original 2020 schedule.

Issues such as roster size, trade deadlines, series length and treatment of the luxury tax would be delegated to a subcommittee.

Pay for minor leaguers

In March, MLB agreed to pay minor league players $400 per week while the sport is shut down amid the coronavirus pandemic. That provision is set to expire at the end of May. The Athletics will not be paying their minor leaguers starting on June 1.

Several teams are doing the right thing, continuing to pay their minor leaguers $400 per week through at least the end of June. The Rangers and White Sox will each tack on another month of pay. It was reported earlier that the Padres will pay their players through the end of August. A Baseball America report mentioned that the Marlins will also pay their players through the end of August.



AP

Washington pitcher Max Scherzer is among the eight players on the MLB union's executive subcommittee and issued a statement late Wednesday night calling management's proposal for more salary cuts a non-starter.

Mickelson wants to make 'The Match' regular event

FLORIDA— Phil Mickelson enjoyed "The Match" as much as everyone else in the United States. Encouraged by the attention "The Match" received, Mickelson is already planning ways to make it a regular event, which would include a number of celebrities.

Mickelson, 49, mentioned a few possible iterations moving forward, including one where he and Tiger Woods teamed up to take down a team of younger golfers. But Mickelson also mentioned inviting different celebrities, like Michael Jordan, Stephen Curry or even Bill Murray, to take part in the event.

"What if Tiger and I were to team up and take on two younger players, or what if we were to team up with younger players and have it be a real high-level golf competition?" Mickelson said. "I think there's a market for that. But you have to have some personality in there, too, so a guy like Justin Thomas showed how funny he is and he would add a lot to an event like that.

"I think you could showcase guys like Steph Curry and Michael Jordan or Tony Romo and Patrick Mahomes, who are all good golfers, elite talents and have great personalities. Those personalities are going to come out with this event. Or you could have someone who loves the game and is competitive but is really entertaining like Larry David and Bill Murray. I think that could shine."

No idea is too outlandish after a record amount of viewers tuned into "The Match" on Sunday. The event averaged 5.8 million viewers and peaked at 6.3 million viewers. Both of those figures set records and made "The Match" the most-watched cable golf telecast. ESPN's Jordan documentary, "The Last Dance," averaged 5.6 million viewers per week. "The Match" beat it out.

The addition of celebrity athletes—like Peyton Manning and Tom Brady—did wonders for the event this time around. Bryan Zuriff, a TV producer who initially pitched the idea to Mickelson, said Brady and Manning brought personality to the event. When Mickelson and Woods took part in the first iteration of "The Match," in which they were the only two playing, they got quiet and intense at the end. It made for good golf, but bad entertainment, according to Zuriff.

Mickelson and Woods still have to oppose each other one more time before the event can undergo drastic changes. The two originally agreed to three head-to-head events. With Woods and Mickelson each taking home a win, a third "The Match" is needed to determine a winner.

After that, the pair is free to do whatever it wants. Mickelson is already brainstorming about the possibilities. ***(AP/NBC)***

Big names remain unsigned late in odd offseason

NEW YORK (AP)—Offseason shopping is still in full swing in the NFL.

Even with the status of the upcoming season uncertain because of the coronavirus pandemic, teams continue to tinker with their rosters by adding players they hope will help them win—whenever or if they actually play.

Virtual workouts are being held all around the league, with some facilities beginning to reopen but still closed to coaches and players. General managers work the phones and chat with agents and unsigned players through video conference calls.

During the last few weeks, Joe Flacco (Jets), Carlos Hyde (Seahawks), Frank Gore (Jets), Ty Montgomery (Saints), D.J. Fluker (Ravens) and Prince Amukamara (Raiders) have found new homes.

Other big names remain unsigned and could end up filling major needs for someone. Here's a look at some still waiting to find the right fit—or, in some cases, for quarantine restrictions to be lifted so they can make in-person visits before they or the teams make a decision:

AP

In this Sept. 29, 2019 file photo, Seattle Seahawks outside linebacker Jadeveon Clowney (90) runs back an interception for a touchdown as Arizona Cardinals offensive guard J.R. Sweezy (64) defends during the first half of an NFL game in Glendale, Ariz.

CAM NEWTON, QB

The former Panthers star missed all but two games last season because of a foot injury and was released in March after Carolina failed to find a trade partner. Newton is 31 and five years removed from his NFL MVP season. He's been posting workout videos on Instagram to show he's now healthy. Where he eventually ends up—likely as a backup, at least at first—remains an intriguing story line of the offseason.

JADEVEON CLOWNEY, DEFENSIVE END

Many believed Clowney would be snatched up quickly by a team desperate for a pass-rushing presence. And for big-time bucks. Instead, the 2014 No. 1 overall draft pick is still unsigned two months later and potentially looking at a one-year, prove-it deal. A return to Seattle isn't out of the question.

Clowney seemed on track to score a megadeal after seasons spent between the Seattle Seahawks and Houston Texans. Instead, the former top overall draft pick has had to lower his asking price of at least $20 million per year and still hasn't found a deal to his liking

Clowney has said he is in no rush to sign, but you have to wonder if that is by choice in a system where teams typically rush to lock up top free agents.

LARRY WARFORD, GUARD

After making the last three Pro Bowls, Warford was cut by New Orleans earlier this month; the Saints drafted Cesar Ruiz in the first round as his obvious successor at right guard. New Orleans also saved $7 million on the salary cap by releasing Warford. He immediately became the most enticing offensive lineman on the market, and will likely find a starting spot.

EVERSON GRIFFEN, DEFENSIVE END

Minnesota's four-time Pro Bowl pick has 74 1/2 career sacks, including 26 1/2 the past three seasons, but he exercised his option to void the remaining three years on his contract. Griffen is reportedly being patient and waiting until he can take in-person visits. He's 32, but showed last season he has plenty left.

LOGAN RYAN, CORNERBACK

Ryan, 29, played his first four NFL seasons with New England, helping the Patriots win two Super Bowls before signing a three-year, $30 million contract that included $12 million guaranteed with Tennessee in 2017. He set career highs with 105 total tackles, 18 passes defensed and 4+ sacks to go along with four interceptions last season, but Tennessee chose to move on.

ERIC REID, SAFETY

Reid was released in March after two seasons in Carolina, despite posting career highs with 124 total tackles and four sacks. He signed a three-year, $22 million contract extension before last season, but the new-look Panthers saved $8 million on the cap this year.

JASON PETERS, LEFT TACKLE

The big man wants to keep going. Peters turned 38 in January and reportedly has told friends he has his sights on playing into his 40s. He had arthroscopic knee surgery that caused him to miss three games in the middle of 2019, but bounced back and was his usual solid self the rest of the way.

DARQUEZE DENNARD, CORNERBACK

It appeared Dennard had a new home early in free agency when he signed with Jacksonville, but the three-year, $13.5 million deal fell through. The former Bengals slot cornerback, a 2014 first-round pick, never really lived up to his lofty draft status in Cincinnati. He was limited to nine games last season after having offseason knee surgery.

KELVIN BEACHUM, LEFT TACKLE

Arguably the Jets' most consistently solid offensive lineman during his three seasons in New York, Beachum, who turns 31 next month, has seen a complete overhaul on the O-line by GM Joe Douglas. Beachum's fate with the Jets was sealed after they drafted Louisville left tackle Mekhi Becton with the No. 11 overall pick. He's still a more-than-serviceable starter.

DEVONTA FREEMAN, RUNNING BACK

Freeman, one of the NFL's most productive backs during the 2015 and `16 seasons, rushed for 11 touchdowns and over 1,000 yards each year. He hasn't been quite the same player since, with various injuries limiting him to two games in 2018 and only 656 yards rushing and two TDs in 14 games last year. Atlanta released him in March, and there are reports he might be willing to sit out this season or even retire if no team meets his hefty contract request.

OTHER NOTABLES

CB Eli Apple, QB Blake Bortles, DT Mike Daniels, DT Marcell Dareus, K Stephen Gostkowski, DT Damon Harrison, S Tony Jefferson, S Reshad Jones, CB Dre Kirkpatrick, RB LeSean McCoy, LB Clay Matthews, RB Lamar Miller, LB Cameron Wake and TE Delanie Walker.

NFL drops booth official proposal to aid calls

NEW YORK (AP)—The NFL has tabled a proposal for a booth official who would aid calls by using a video feed, a person familiar with the decision tells The Associated Press.

The league's competition committee told teams last month it supports studying ways to determine how officiating personnel who have access to a video feed could help on-field officials. A booth umpire would serve as an eighth game official.

But when the owners vote on rules proposals in a conference call Thursday, they instead will be looking at alternatives to a booth official, the person said on condition of anonymity because the league has not announced the move.

Those alternatives will focus on preseason tests of expanding the authority of the current replay assistant as he communicates with on-field officials.

Several reasons for dismissing the booth official suggestion have been offered, from the extra cost of another permanent official to the fact college football has such a setup. Regardless, the league's approach to improving officiating now will center on enhancing the current system.

Earlier Wednesday, the NFL clarified the rules proposal for an alternative to an onside kick.

The Philadelphia Eagles have proposed allowing one fourth-and-15 scrimmage play from 25-yard line of the team kicking off. It can only be done in regulation time, and be used twice. Should the team attempting the play succeed, it would keep the ball. If the defense is successful, its offense gets the ball at the spot where the play is blown dead.

A regular onside kick would remain an option.

Team owners will discuss and possibly vote on the Eagles' suggestion on Thursday. The idea is to virtually eliminate the onside kick that is considered more dangerous than most other football plays, while offering a substitute that could be exciting—and game changing.

Recent rules changes regarding alignments on onside kicks and run-ups for kicking team players have turned the exercise into something of a relic attempted only in desperate situations. In the last two years, less than 10% of onside kicks succeeded.

After the kicking team notifies the referee it wants to attempt the fourth-and-15 play, it would need to reach its 40-yard line to convert. However, penalties incurred on the previous play, such as a field goal or extra point, would apply and would change the line of scrimmage for the play, which would remain a fourth-and-15 attempt.

Once a team has opted for the scrimmage play, that decision sticks—unless the team calls a timeout before running the fourth-and-15 play. It could then notify the referee it has decided to kick off instead, and do so. That would seem like a waste of a timeout.

If the offense has run the alternative play and been flagged for a penalty, the yardage is marked off and another scrimmage play is run. Switching to kicking off instead is barred in that scenario.

The game clock would not run for the play, though a 25-second play clock would be in force.

Some people within the NFL find the proposal gimmicky, and there's some support for trying it in the preseason as an experiment, then evaluating its impact. But due to the coronavirus pandemic, it's uncertain if the NFL will have a preseason or what it would look like.

Lillard explains how he'd structure NBA's return

NEW YORK—One day after making national headlines for saying that he will not play when the NBA resumes the season unless the Trail Blazers have a real shot at making the postseason, Damian Lillard clarified his comments.

"It was taken out of context because it was a casual conversation," said Lillard. "It was like expletive this and expletive that but it wasn't a demonstrative statement. I was just saying we've been off for two months and if we come back we want to play for something."

The Blazers' franchise player was then asked if he could structure the NBA's return what shape would it take?

"If I could I would design some type of play-in tournament between all the teams that were in striking distance because Sacramento was playing their best basketball of the season, so was New Orleans, and so were we. And none of those teams were in the playoffs but we were within striking distance with enough games left in the season to catch Memphis. So I feel like a play-in tournament would be perfect," he said.

The Blazers had possession of the ninth seed in the Western Conference when the NBA season got suspended indefinitely on March 11, sitting 3.5 games behind the Memphis Grizzlies for the final playoff spot. However, both the New Orleans Pelicans and Sacramento Kings had one less win and one less loss than the Blazers, making them both also 3.5 games behind the Grizzlies.

Earlier ESPN reported that the NBA's considering bringing back 20 teams, including the four teams within striking distance of the eighth seed in Portland, New Orleans, Sacramento, and San Antonio.

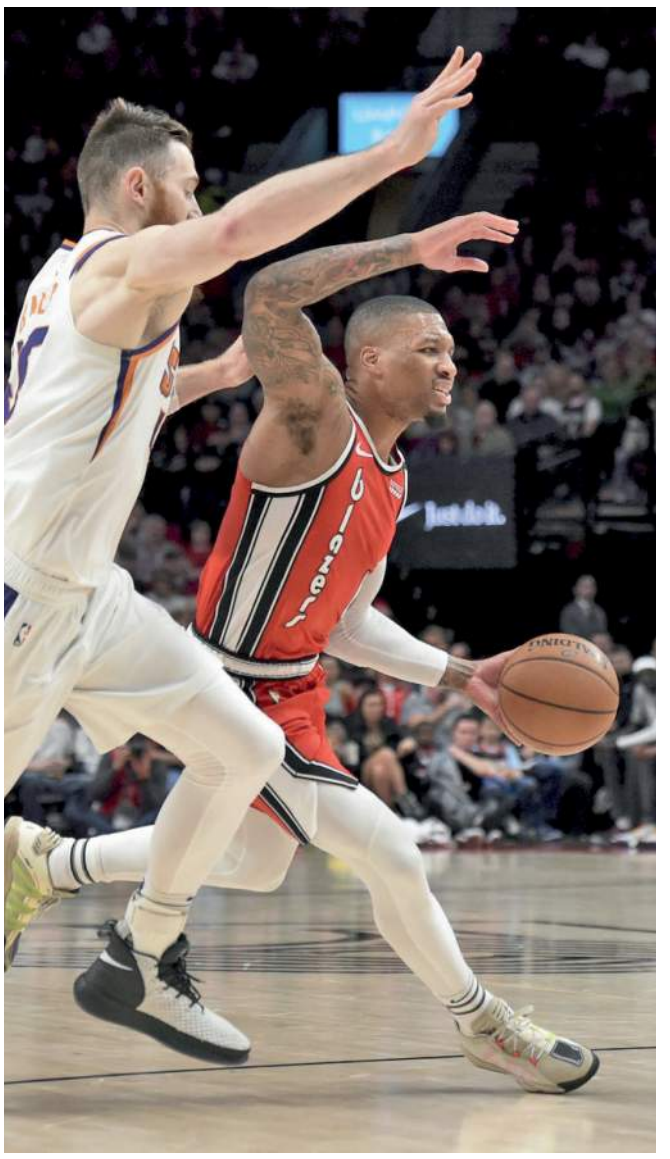
Lillard did also mention if the NBA just goes straight to the postseason and takes the top-16 teams, then he'd be disappointed but able to accept the decision.

"Just because we were within striking distance and had enough games to get into the playoffs but to that point, if they did decide that you know, we just going to go straight to the playoffs obviously we would all be disappointed but to this point we haven't performed to be in that top-eight so if that's the case then fine. But if we are going to come back to play games I feel that would be harder on everybody else."

Lillard originally said he'd want a chance to make the postseason at the end of March in a zoom press conference where he stated that the league should implement a play-in tournament similar to March Madness.

"When the season does come back, I feel like it's only right that teams get a chance to make a playoff push, like ourselves, give us a chance to get in. Or, some type of tournament style where it's fair," said Lillard. "It's obviously gonna be a different situation than it has ever been, so maybe they should do something that has never been done. Or something that is going to make this year very unique like it already has been."

Will Lillard get his wish? It's looking likely, especially since the NBA will do everything in their power to get Zion back on the court who currently sits below the Blazers in the standings.



AP

In this March 10, 2020 file photo, Portland Trail Blazers guard Damian Lillard, right, drives to the basket on Phoenix Suns center Aron Baynes, left, during the first quarter of an NBA game in Portland, Ore.

Thibodeau to coach Knicks?

The New York Knicks have reportedly started a list of candidates to fill their vacant head coaching position, and according to The Athletic's Shams Charania, former Minnesota Timberwolves head coach and president of basketball operations Tom Thibodeau is at the top of that list.

Thibodeau, who was fired by the Timberwolves in January 2019, would be replacing David Fizdale. Fizdale was fired in December after leading the Knicks to a 4-18 start, just 19 months into a four-year contract. The Knicks' start was so horrendous that Thibodeau was being mentioned as a candidate for the job even before Fizdale was officially fired.

The Knicks have not confirmed that they're considering Thibodeau. Neither has Thibodeau, probably because saying "I would like to coach the Knicks" is rightly considered a cry for help. The Knicks have had five head coaches since 2015, seven total in the last 10 years, and another six in the decade before that. Not even Spinal Tap replaced their drummers at that rate.

Knicks owner James Dolan, who operates his basketball team like the world's worst puppeteer, is famously overinvolved with the Knicks. He's been criticized for his poor decision-making and constant micromanaging, making the Knicks head coaching job one of the least desirable in all of sports. There is a little hope, though, as Dolan has cleaned house this season and is appearing to cede some control to new team president Leon Rose.

THEA

From Page 24

Athletic Association, as she suited up for Henderson. She debuted for the Reddies in the spring of 2017 and made history for the team.

"I had a long three-set match and that win helped our school move on to the semifinals. Before that, Henderson State tennis team has not moved to the next round since it switched to the Great American Conference," Minor added.

Also at Henderson, the youngest daughter of the late Joy and Boyet Minor was named one of the Intercollegiate Tennis Association All-Academic Scholar Athletes. An ITA Scholar-Athlete status is given to a player that has a varsity letter winner with a grade point average of at least 3.50 for the current academic year, and has been enrolled at their present school for at least two semesters.

Meanwhile, Minor is excited that two CNMI players—Carol Lee and Robbie Schorr— will play college tennis this fall. Lee is heading to Georgia Tech, while Schorr will go to William Woods University.

Based on her experience, Minor said the freshman season will be tough for Lee and Schorr, but they will manage, as they will meet new teammates and coaches that will help them go through their student-athlete life.

"I was lucky to have teammates I have known in Fiji, but I was also glad to meet new ones. My advice would be to stay on top of schoolwork because it will get tough during the tennis season. Also, enjoy the college tennis experience. You would not get another chance like this again," Minor said.

Minor treasured every memory of her playing years in college and in the CNMI and is deeply grateful to the sport that opened many opportunities to her and to the people who helped her develop her skills.

"I receive a lot of opportunities from playing tennis. I was able to get not one but two degrees and meet new friends, new teammates, new professors, and new coaches. I learned a lot from them as a tennis player and an individual," said Minor.

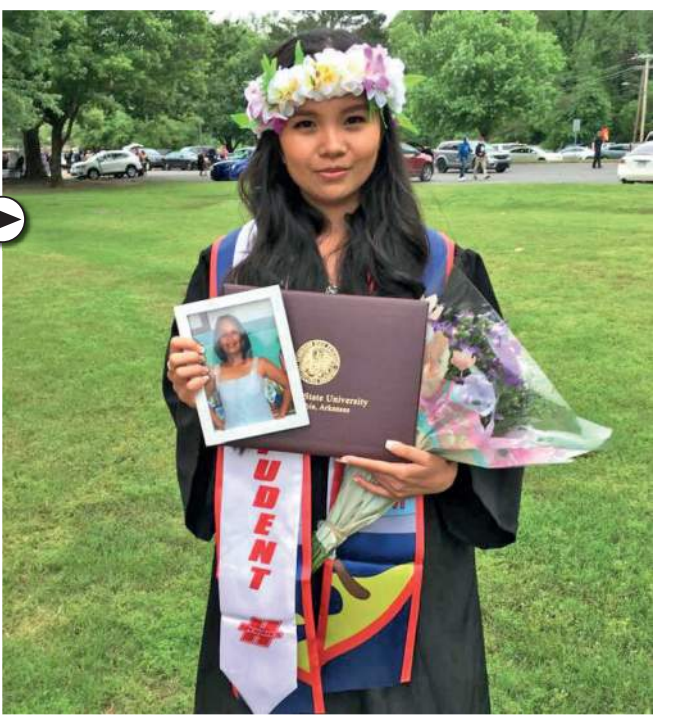
The record six-time winner of the women's open singles event in the Pacific Islands Club Saipan Tennis Championship still plays, but only occasionally, as she is now working as a vision therapist and hopes to return to school to gain a bachelor's degree in nursing.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Then 10-year-old Thea Minor serves during a local tournament at the Pacific Islands Club Saipan in 2008.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Thea Minor poses with her fellow graduates at the New Mexico Military Institute.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Thea Minor shows the photo of her late mom, Joy, and her diploma after graduating at Henderson State University last year.

Players want more games, no more salary cuts

PAGE 21

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Big names remain unsigned late in odd offseason

PAGE 22

Play hard, study harder

NEW MEXICO MILITARY SCHOOL

In this 2016 file photo, the CNMI's Thea Minor, second left, poses with her New Mexico Military Institute teammates and coach Dan O'Connell before their game.

HENDERSON STATE UNIVERSITY

In this 2018 file photo, Henderson State University's Thea Minor returns a shot to Oklahoma Baptist's Kim Moosebacher during a singles game in the Great American Conference in Arkansas.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

It's graduation time and so former CNMI junior tennis player Thea Minor can't help but looked back at how she managed to further her education through sports.

The Saipan Southern High School alumna finished not one, but two courses, as she earned athletic scholarships from two schools in the mainland.

"I played my first two years of college with New Mexico Military Institute. I graduated back in 2016 with an associate degree in pre-nursing. I played my last two years with Henderson State University and graduated in 2019 with a bachelor's degree in human services," said Minor, who is now based in California.

With the NMMI Broncos, she made it to the National Junior College Athletic Association Division I National Championships in both years, while she advanced to the finals in her last season.

Attending regular classes and travelling to compete in various tournaments plus having training sessions were really tough for the former Northern Marianas Sports Association Female Student Athlete of the Year.

"Balancing school and sports was always a challenge to me, no matter how many years I have been doing it," Minor said.

From the NJCAA, the many-time CNMI Junior National Team member jumped to the bigger National Collegiate

See THEA on Page 23

Rota golfers wish to resume play

The Rota Aluf Golf Association is hoping to return to action as it seeks the assistance of the Rota Resort and Country Club for securing a venue for the group's competitions and activities.

The request was made through Sen. Paul A. Manglona (R-Rota), who sent a letter to Rota Resort and Country Club owner Hee Cho last Wednesday.

"As you may be aware, the Rota Aluf Golf Association, a non-profit organization, was established to promote youth activities in the community and schools through golf programs and competitions. With the recent lifting of many COVID-19 restrictions, the gradual resumption of domestic economic activity in all our islands, and classes being virtually held, there is no better time than today to get our young people engaged in outdoor activities, such as golf," Manglona said.

Last Monday, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres eased the restrictions on businesses and curfew, as he made amendments to the COVID-19 emergency directives. Even before the changes were made, some establishments, including golf courses on Saipan, have resumed their operation while still observing social distancing rules.

"With social distancing measures still in place and golf being a no-contact sport, we are hoping that you will be amenable to resuming operations at the golf course, even at a minimum, such as weekend or half day operations," Manglona said.

Saipan Tribune reached out to Rota Resort to ask for comments on the Rota Aluf Golf Association and Manglona's request, but has yet to get a response at press time last night.

Rota Aluf Golf Association is headed by Arvin C. Ogo and has over 20 members. Before the coronavirus pandemic, the group holds monthly tournaments and also provides programs to the island's youth.

Last year, the group had the Inaugural Aluf Luta Golf Tournament that also featured players from Saipan, Tinian, and Guam. ***(Roselyn B. Monroyo)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

A golfer tees off at the Rota Golf & Country Club.